PLAYS and POLITICS: Harold Clurman

THE NATION

October 25, 1965 . . 35c

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The Best Torture: A Vietnam Dialogue

'ONCE YOU'VE BROKEN HIM DOWN . . .'

Marshall Sahlins

British Peace Movement: LOOKING FOR THE MARCHERS Theodore Roszak

Moscow Restoration: THE DRAGON OF BUREAUCRACY Isaac Deutscher

HEMINGWAY'S LAST LAUGH Kermit Vanderbilt

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LETTERS

China coverage

Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Sirs: An editorial in your October 4 issue, titled "The No-Enterprise System," makes this statement with regard to the reports of Charles Taylor from China:

"The articles have appeared frequently in *The New York Times*, and occasionally in *The Washington Post*, the *San Francisco Chronicle* and a few other papers, but the bulk of the American press has ignored them."

Regrettably, your statement as regards "the bulk of the American press" may be true—but you have overlooked completely one of the largest newspapers in this country, *The Philadelphia Evening and Sunday Bulletin.*

The *Bulletin* . . . has printed every article Taylor has written and has used as much as a full page at a time of pictures taken by him in China. . . .

William B. Dickinson
Managing Editor

Frost and The Nation

Port Credit, Ont.

Dear Sirs: It is with mixed feelings of dismay, anger, incredulity and depression that I note the absence of even the barest reference to Robert Frost in the article by Alexander Laing, "*The Nation* and Its Poets," in your One Hundredth Anniversary issue. . . . Since you did not publish Frost during his and your long lifetime, the first question is, why didn't you? If your answer should be that he didn't offer you his poetry then the next question is, why didn't you go after it—at least some of it? If you did go after Frost and he turned you down, then say so, and if you know why he turned you down say that also. If you just didn't like his poetry then why didn't you say so? If you regret not having paid him any attention, then say so. . . . I think you and Alexander Laing owe your readers an explanation.

Byron A. Waite

Hanover, N.H.

Dear Sirs: Robert Frost first appeared in *The Nation* in 1921 with "The Pauper Witch of Grafton." "The Armful," "Blood" and "The Bear" followed in 1928. Since I wanted the objectivity that comes from using only the public record, I have seen nothing in your files that might tell us why poet and publication got together so tardily and parted so soon. Frost was first brought to wide public notice in *The Independent*, in 1894. It had published seven of his poems by 1908. *The Atlantic Monthly*, beginning in 1915, and other notable journals, have published many more over a longer period. Thus, in a piece on "*The Nation* and Its Poets," there is not much reason for claiming Frost as one of "its." . . . To meet a space limitation, I gave priority to an adequate treatment of the poetry prizes of the twenties and regretfully substituted one phrase — that the magazine, in that decade, "honored the stronger established poets"—for a large amount of material that I had hoped to include. Frost's four appearances all occurred in that excised period. . . .

Alexander Laing

Moral bomb

Bronx, N. Y.

Dear Sirs: At the Vatican Council it was the "ultraconservative" Alfredo Cardinal Ottaviani, secretary of the Holy Office and *éminence* most *grise* in the eyes of Church reformers, who led the fight to outlaw atomic armaments. He said *all* forms of violence, nuclear or conventional, should be condemned. The American "progressives" meanwhile were arguing that nuclear weapons are morally acceptable when used for deterrence. They emphasized the distinction between "offensive" and "defensive" arms.

God spare us from the forces of enlightenment! Their radiance burns the skin.

George Koski

Puppet press

Racine, Wis.

Dear Sirs: As I read "The Crackdown" [editorial, Oct. 11] I suddenly realized that Marthin Luther King has become completely absent from news copy and television reporting since his statements about our Vietnam policy. In addition to the fact "that the decision makers in Washington are sensitive to the teach-ins and other forms of public protest and discussion of the war in Vietnam" ["A Presidential Front," editorial, Oct. 11], it appears that they exercise an extraordinary degree of control over the news media. Is our "free press" free only to write what is acceptable to the leaders and some of the followers?

Charles Conrard, III

Rant

Lincoln, Neb.

Dear Sirs: David Mandel's statement, "The great art of our day without exception favors the Left" [letter to *The Nation*, Oct. 11] parallels the bigoted nonsense I am used to seeing in newspaper letters-to-the-editor columns. I am a profound admirer of Malraux, Silone and Picasso. I also admire such great modern artists as Conrad, Hesse, Stevens and Rilke. . . . Must *The Nation* print rant in order to remain a democratic forum?

Mordecai Marcus

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Africa on the Verge

Since World War II, European countries have with few exceptions allowed recalcitrant colonies or members of commonwealths to go their own way. If Rhodesia were a united country in quest of independence, Britain would no doubt be prepared to accede. But "independence" in this instance is only a front for tyrannical racism. The freedom which Prime Minister Ian D. Smith demands is the right to maintain the control of some 217,000 obdurate whites over 4 million blacks, so that the exploitation of the blacks may continue. Smith and his followers, like the white racists in neighboring South Africa and the white racists in our own South, are living in the past. To them, "independence" means the right to balk the forces of the 20th century.

By all indications, time will run out on the white dictatorship in Rhodesia before it runs out in South Africa or in the United States. After his last meeting with Prime Minister Harold Wilson, Smith emerged from No. 10 Downing Street white-faced but resolute. He now has more reason for the qualms which showed on his face. Out of 117 member states of the United Nations, 107 supported an Assembly resolution calling upon Britain to "take all steps necessary" to prevent or end the threatened Rhodesian rebellion. The only dissents came from Portugal and South Africa, where white minorities are in the same situation as the whites in Rhodesia. Britain took no part in the proceedings, on the ground that Rhodesia was a constitutional problem for the United Kingdom, and the UN had no right to intervene. This was a necessary technical move. Actually, the British welcomed UN support, which may have been the last hope of bringing the rebellious Rhodesians to terms.

The U.S. stand must have been particularly heartening to the British and dismaying to the Rhodesian die-hards. Ambassador Goldberg pledged that we would "take the necessary concrete steps, in concert with others" to balk a unilateral declaration of independence. The sanctions which Prime Minister Wilson has threatened include cutting off Rhodesian tobacco purchases, freezing sterling reserves, refusing to recognize Rhodesian passports, and corollary measures. If these do not avail, military action will follow. It would hardly be easier for Ian Smith and his followers to prevail in such a war than it was for Cheddi Jagan to prevail against London's intervention in British Guiana. The difference is that morally Jagan had a case; Smith has none.

If Smith is frightened, so is Wilson, and with good reason. The white minority in Africa, to use an outdated metaphor, is sitting on a powder keg. The black majority in Rhodesia might be the first to suffer if civil war should break out, but all Africa could be set aflame. White enclaves might resist for a time, perhaps for a long time, but in the end white domination of Africa "South of the Sahara" is doomed. It would be far better if Smith's followers, and the racists the world over, could learn this lesson without a blood bath.

Poor Karl Mundt, Poor GOP!

Sen. Karl Mundt is so conservative that one finds it hard to conceive of anyone to his right. Imperturbable and happy, he sat at Joe McCarthy's side and assisted in the inquisitions of the Senate Internal Security Committee. Before that he was one of the luminaries of the House Un-American Activities Committee. Denouncing atheistic communism and baiting labor were the foundations of his political career, along with supporting farm prices, which is of course essential in South Dakota. He has a plaque from Americans for Constitutional Action certifying to his hyper-Americanism. He supported Barry Goldwater.

In the face of all these good deeds, poor Karl is getting hell—from the Right. Richard Murphy, a member of the John Birch Society who says he was born and reared in Huron, S.D., has returned to his native state from Orange County in California, a Birch stronghold, where he practiced law and managed the successful state Senate campaign of another Birchite, John Schmitz. Mundt is not conservative enough for Murphy, who has announced his intention of running against the old fellow in the Republican primary. Mundt, it is reported, cannot understand why the Birchites should pick on him. He does not think that he is in danger in the primary, but he acknowledges that Murphy may cause enough dissension among the Republicans to throw his Senate seat to a Democrat in the general election next year.

Mundt is not alone in his fears. Somewhat belatedly, Sen. Thruston Morton, for years a big wheel in the GOP, declares in stentorian tones that the party ought

The Nation takes pleasure in announcing that with this issue Warren Miller joins the staff as literary editor. Mr. Miller is the author of six novels, notably *The Cool World* and *Looking for the General*; in 1961 he published *Ninety Miles from Home*, a report on Cuba based on his visit there. His short stories have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Paris Review* and *The Saturday Evening Post*. Mr. Miller is a graduate of the University of Iowa, where he taught for a time in the English Department, and the recipient of an award from The Academy and National Institute of Arts and Letters.

Grandin Conover, the previous literary editor, has resigned from the magazine to accept a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation.

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to kick the John Birch Society "square in the tail." No one saw him booting members of the Society at the 1964 Republican convention, although there were plenty of them around. Senate Minority Leader Everett M. Dirksen and House Minority Leader Gerald R. Ford join in reading the Birchites out of the GOP. Even Barry Goldwater, writing in the *National Review*, puts the Society on probation. Either Robert Welch should resign or the members should, Barry advises.

All these staunch advocates of traditional Republicanism should have begun the purge of Birchites earlier, if they meant business. Their chance of success now is rather slim. The Republican organizations in the five states that went for Goldwater are for the most part firmly in the grasp of the Birchites. The Republican organization in California soon may be. The top leadership of the GOP can invite the unwelcome rightists to leave from now to 1968, but the invitation will probably be declined. The moral is that if party crashers are allowed to stay and dance with the girls, it is difficult to oust them at the stroke of midnight.

New York's Newspapers

Washington may be the political capital of the country but New York comes closer to being the information capital, partly because *The New York Times* is published there. The primacy of the *Times* was handsomely acknowledged by David Lawrence in his syndicated column, which appears in the New York *Herald Tribune*. Mr. Lawrence pointed out that the *Times* presents daily a comprehensive record of public events and, in full text or only slightly abridged, pronouncements on governmental matters of incalculable value to historians. When the *Times* is blacked out, historians of the future, and commentators of the present, are proportionately handicapped. Yet this calamity in information gathering and recording has occurred twice in less than three years, lasting twenty-five days in the labor-management battle which has just ended, and 114 days in the even more woeful showdown of 1962-63. And as matters now stand, when the present contracts expire in less than eighteen months, New Yorkers will again be deprived of their newspapers for an indefinite period.

There must be a better way to run an industry! Daily and weekly newspapers, *The Nation* included, advise and comment on everything under the sun Nothing escapes their omniscience, except perhaps how to run their own business. Nor is this failing confined to the New York sector of the industry—newspaper strikes occur in other cities, and some have lasted not for months but for more than a year.

If a cure, or at least a palliative, can be found in New York, it might be applied elsewhere. Some fumbling attempts have been made. The trouble is that they are started but never carried on. In the last three labor-management confrontations of the New York press, Theodore W. Kheel has been the mediator. Mr. Kheel bears the scars of a quarter century of industrial peacemaking, and his ideas must be given due weight. He is quoted as saying that he has never seen a worse mess than that which has been created by the joint efforts of the newspaper publishers and unions in New York. Yet Mr. Kheel has made constructive proposals which, had they been followed up, might have averted the last strike and could avert the next one.

After the 114-day shutdown Mayor Wagner, at Mr. Kheel's behest, set up a Joint Industry Board for the discussion, on a continuing basis, of automation and other issues which trouble the industry. The proposed board has never functioned. The basic reason is that there is a lack of unity among the publishers on the one hand and among the unions on the other. In 1963 the *Post* defected, in 1965 the *Herald Tribune*. On the union side, the rivalry between the Newspaper Guild and Typographical Union No. 6—the printers—is another stumbling block to any rational solution of the industry's problems. On both sides, the attitude is basically that every unit must strive for its own advantage, and the devil take the hindmost. In some New York industries, the garment trades for instance, a wiser attitude has succeeded this invitation to chaos. One can only hope that after this last costly lesson a concerted effort will be made to put Mr. Kheel's recommendations to practical use. If discussion of the newspaper industry's problems can be started now and carried on resolutely, a less costly method of settling disputes may yet be worked out. The alternative is fewer papers and fewer jobs, and more revenue for the television networks.

The Nonprofits Again

The Nation's editorial of May 24, 1965, "Is Aerospace Corp. Necessary?" was a pat on the back compared with the blistering report of the Subcommittee for Special Investigations of the House Committee on Armed Services, of which Porter Hardy, Jr. (D., Va.), is chairman. Aerospace Corporation is a "nonprofit" auxiliary of the Air Force which got out of control to such an extent that even an aerospace trade journal refers editorially to "the Aerospace mess" and agrees that the blame must be laid at the door of the Air Force. Apparently what the Aerospace president, Dr. Ivan A. Getting, was trying to establish was a novel type of institution which would give its executives all the privileges of a profit-oriented corporation together with the advantages of working for the government, but without the responsibility of a corporation to its stockholders or of a government agency to the Congress and the Executive. And until Mr. Hardy's subcommittee caught up with him, he was not unsuccessful.

It is no secret that one purpose of a nonprofit corporation of the Aerospace type is to get around government salary restrictions. The subcommittee points out that a vicious circle is in the making here. In a message to Congress in May, 1965, President Johnson gave support to the argument that federal salary rates should be kept in "appropriate relationship" with

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rates prevailing throughout the economy. Then the government sets up nonprofit corporations as a means to pay higher salaries to the aerospace elite, with the result that federal salaries must be raised to make them competitive with those of the nonprofits, and so on, around and around.

Dr. Getting himself is an example. At the Raytheon Corporation, which is no niggardly employer, Dr. Getting's salary as vice president for engineering and research was $45,000 a year, plus stock options. Aerospace hired him at $75,000 a year, plus "incentive compensation" of $15,000, making a total of $90,000; there were also fringe benefits. His relocation expenses were $7,840.14, including $3,133.02 for trucking his 40-foot yacht from Gloucester, Mass., to San Pedro, Calif. The cost to Aerospace of a banquet Dr. Getting gave for eighty-eight people in 1962 was $1,981.76. A premium of $1,800 a year was paid by the corporation for his group life insurance of $350,000. Nor does this exhaust the list of benefits.

However, it would be unfair to pillory Dr. Getting for what everybody else in Aerospace was doing to the best of his ability. They may have turned out some valuable work for the Air Force—as Gen. Bernard A. Schriever, the founding father of Aerospace, claims — but the upper managers were riding the gravy train for all it was worth.

Nor was the life of the intellect neglected. A 44-year-old executive was granted a leave of absence to work for his Ph.D. at Princeton in theoretical research on statistical quantum mechanics. During his year of learning he received a stipend of $16,000 and $14,000 of his $40,000 salary, or $30,000 in all—perhaps a record for completing one's education in comfort.

Of course, these sums are trifling when compared with Aerospace's business expenditures, the results of which the Hardy committee did not attempt to evaluate. In the five years of its existence Aerospace's contracts have amounted to $309 million and its fees, which correspond to profits among the unregenerate, have totaled about $16 million, or nearly 5.2 per cent of sales. This corresponds to a net of more than 10 per cent for a private corporation, since the nonprofit is exempt from income tax. The fee is what gives a nonprofit latitude in spending, since expenditures which cannot be charged to disbursement, which are itemized, can be taken out of fees, which are not. One Air Force contracting officer asked 200 times for data on the disposition of Aerospace fees and was turned down 200 times, on the ground that it was none of the Air Force's business. The contracting officer's superiors, right up to General Schriever, did nothing about this gap in fiscal control, which was corrected only after the revelations of the Hardy committee.

The new Secretary of the Air Force, Dr. Harold Brown, has the obligation to see to it that such lapses do not occur again. And it would be prudent for Secretary McNamara to reconsider whether nonprofit corporations are the best means of carrying out the broad functions which have been entrusted to them.

Atomic Water vs. Atomic Power

Whether nuclear control can be achieved at all is extremely doubtful. It calls for a degree of international trust and cooperation that does not exist and probably cannot be created in time to avert a free-for-all, with another dozen nations muscling into the nuclear club. The difficulties will be compounded by the inevitable development of dual-purpose nuclear plants for desalting sea water and generating electric power. Some of these plants may become triple-purpose, openly or surreptitiously turning out explosives for nuclear bombs. This additional complication points up the folly of U.S. State Department policy, supported so far by President Johnson and Prime Minister Harold Wilson, in clinging to the multilateral-force concept, which is a primary obstacle to even a token eighteen-nation agreement on measures to halt, or at least retard, nuclear proliferation.

Small nuclear water plants are in the design stage or beyond, and large ones are under intensive study, both in the United States and abroad. New York State, with federal aid, will have a small plant in operation near the eastern end of Long Island by 1968. It will generate 2.5 megawatts of electricity and produce about 1 million gallons of fresh water daily. American Machine and Foundry Company has been selected as the contractor. For New York City, staring a water famine in the face, a million gallons a day, even if it were available now, would be a drop in the bucket, but the city is discussing with federal officials a nuclear plant capable of desalting about 250 million gallons a day, or approximately a fifth of normal consumption. On roughly the same scale, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, the Atomic Energy Commission and the Office of Saline Water are considering a plant which would generate 1,800 megawatts of electric power and distill 150 million gallons of sea water daily.

In the United States the chief problems in connection with such plants are siting and disposal of radioactive wastes. Presumably weapons-grade plutonium would be separated and sold back to the government, but it already produces more than it needs. Abroad, the situation is different. Israel, for example, has a 24-megawatt research reactor, built with French help, which by the rule-of-thumb figure of 1 gram of reclaimed plutonium per day for each megawatt of capacity could produce perhaps 7.5 kilograms per year or, in something over a year, enough for a "small" or Hiroshima-type bomb. The United Arab Republic has only a 2-megawatt Soviet-built research reactor at present, and it may be that the 150-megawatt desalting reactor on which Nasser had been receiving bids from American and West German firms would likewise be used only for peaceful purposes, but the Israelis might have their doubts. Yet the entire Middle East is in a chronic state of water shortage, and both Israel and Egypt are justified in planning to convert sea water for domestic and agricultural use.

In Brussels, talks between our Atomic Energy

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Commission and the European Atomic Community (Euratom) have considered a heavy-water reactor cooled with organic materials for desalting sea water, generating electric power, and producing fissile material. All this technological progress is in contrast with the utter lack of political progress in the nuclear sphere. Preventing proliferation is a forlorn hope at best, but any remaining chance of control is dashed by the British-American insistence on "strengthening" NATO with atomic weapons, primarily to satisfy West German demands. The Russians will not consent to what they feel would ultimately put atomic weapons under independent German control. With Polaris submarines already congesting European waters, it is hard to see what added strength a multilateral force would provide, but right-wing British Labour, and Mr. Rusk's static State Department, are solicitous only for NATO and the importunate Germans.

MOSCOW RESTORATION

The Dragon of Bureaucracy . . . Isaac Deutscher

The Soviet Union has just become the scene of a gigantic economic and administrative upheaval. At its last session, the Party's Central Committee decided to undo and obliterate most of the Khrushchev reforms of the 1950s. The whole structure of the Soviet economy is to be overhauled, and Prime Minister Kosygin has made it clear that it will be two or three years before the resulting disarray is brought under control. The overriding purpose of the changes is to reinvest in Moscow the strict central control over the economy that was once, before Khrushchev's days, exercised from there.

Eight years have passed since Khrushchev struck a heavy blow against Moscow's bureaucracy, ordered the disbandment of scores of central economic ministries, and set up more than a hundred *Sovnarkhozy*, or Economic Councils, each of which was to manage the affairs of the hundred or so economic regions into which the country was divided. That reform was intended to break the rigidities of the Stalinist super-centralization, to do justice to local interests, and to release local initiative and social energy. In the years 1957 and 1958, Moscow bade farewell to its managerial aristocracy, whose members were leaving the capital for more modest posts in remote provinces. In vain did Molotov, Kaganovich and Malenkov then try to rally the industrial "barons" and to preserve the central management of the economy. That was the heyday of de-Stalinization and Khrushchev appeared to be the Soviet St. George slaying the dragon of bureaucracy.

Now, a year after Khrushchev's downfall, the dragon seems to be reviving and returning in triumph. The central economic ministries are being re-created, the regional *Sovnarkhozy* are disbanding. A new migration of the bureaucracy is beginning: after a diaspora lasting eight years the barons are about to return to their old seat of power in Moscow. Meanwhile, there is an interregnum in the immense realm of Soviet industry: the *Sovnarkhozy* have lost power; the central ministries are not yet formed; and for the time being the *Gosplan*, the State Planning Commission, which has no experience in the practical management of industry, is supposed to wield authority.

It is with some obvious misgivings that the Soviet Prime Minister has launched this counterreform. Between the lines of his long and grim speech at the Central Committee he tried to reassure the country that what it is experiencing is not a relapse into the absurdities of the Stalinist bureaucracy. While he insisted on the necessity to restore central control of industry, he also dwelt on the need to restrict that control to a few selected but crucial areas, and to guarantee the rights and prerogatives of local managers and producers. A special Charter of the Socialist Factory is to rationalize the system of management on the spot and to protect it against arbitrary interference from the top. The new ministries, unlike their Stalinist predecessors, are to avoid pressing managers and workers for mere quantitative production records. They are to judge the work of any factory not so much by its indices of gross output, which often conceal inferior produce, but by the indices of actual sales, which measure more accurately the socio-economic value of the output. In this respect, Kosygin has intimated, Soviet industry should move even further away from the Stalin era than it has done so far.

The state, he has further announced, will gradually stop paying subsidies to all industrial concerns working at a deficit; henceforth, every industrial unit should produce at a profit. This does not amount to the "rehabilitation of the profit motive" predicted by some Western Sovietologists in connection with the the so-called Liberman Debate. For one thing, there has hardly been the need for any "rehabilitation of profit." In each of the last two years, for instance, profits shown by Soviet industry amounted to something like 40 billion rubles, between 20 and 25 per cent of the net national income. At present, half of the national investment funds and other government expenditure is provided by industry's profits and half by indirect taxation. The balance between the government's revenues from these two sources has decisive economic, political and cultural significance. Throughout the decades of forced industrialization, Stalin obtained most of the accumulation funds from heavy indirect taxation, which served to keep down popular consumption, to subsidize deficit industries, and to expand industries which were growing much faster than their own accumulation funds. With the progress of industrialization, indirect taxation has

Isaac Deutscher is the author of many books on the USSR, among them The Great Contest: Russia and the West, and a three-volume life of Trotsky (both Oxford University Press).

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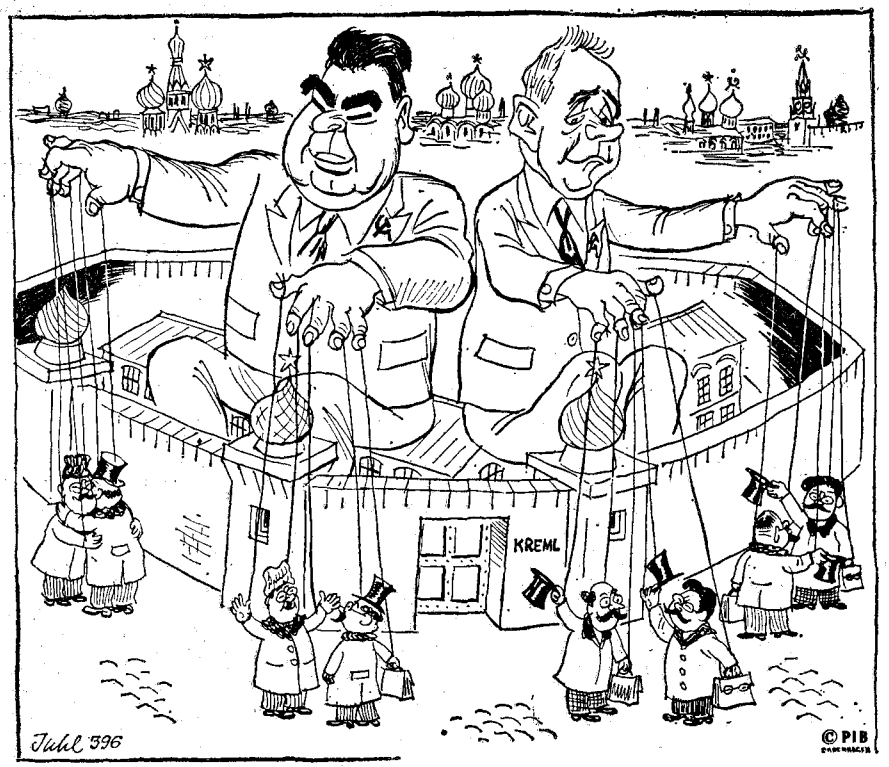

Ben Roth Agency

played a decreasing part and industrial profits an increasing part in financing further economic development. (Therein, to put it in technical Marxist terms, consists the transition from "primitive" to "normal" Socialist accumulation.)

Kosygin has now stated that the government is going to carry this policy a long step further. Henceforth, industry is to insure its continued expansion by means of self-finance, that is, by drawing on its own profits. This implies a further relative reduction in indirect taxation and a relative increase in the population's purchasing power, which must find its outlet in an increased volume of available consumer goods.

In a state-owned economy, however, the question of whether any industry can draw on its profits is often a matter of bookkeeping, for the profitability of an industry may depend on the prices it can obtain for its produce, and the government fixes the prices. A new Price-Fixing Commission is now therefore to revise the entire price structure of the Soviet economy, with an eye to enabling producer industries to become financially self-supporting and consumer industries to expand faster than hitherto.

Eager to justify this overhaul of the industrial machinery and the new policies, Kosygin spoke emphatically about the slowing down of Russia's rate of development in recent years. This has shown itself in the not-quite-satisfactory results of the Seven Year Plan now coming to a close. Although gross industrial output has risen by 84 per cent since 1958, this growth has been, according to the Soviet Prime Minister, far too slow in relation to fixed capital investment; and, similarly, the rise in productivity per man-hour has been sluggish. The continued crisis in agriculture—this year has again brought poor harvests—limits the volume of available consumer goods and affects badly the morale and the efficiency of industrial workers. All this, Kosygin concludes, compels a recentralization and a rationalization of economic management. The Soviet administration, he claims, has not been able to cope with its mounting difficulties because Khrushchev, in his zeal for decentralization, deprived it of the means of effective economic action.

There is undoubtedly some truth in all this. It has been clear for quite a long time that the Khrushchevite reforms, far from curing the Soviet economy of the ills of too rigid bureaucracy, have added to these the drawbacks of extreme decentralization. The regional *Sovnarkhozy* have developed their own local interests and particularisms and have thus weakened the cohesiveness and the momentum of the national economy.

Yet it is exceedingly doubtful whether the present return to central control will prove to be the remedy. The curse of a bureaucratic regime is that it cannot strike a sound balance between central control and local initiative, and Soviet management has periodically floundered between the extremes of despotic over-centralization and particularist-bureaucratic anarchy.

There is also in Kosygin's counterreform more than a mere reaction against the excesses and disappointments of the Khrushchevite decentralization. The Soviet Premier has made a special appeal to the managerial groups, with whom Khrushchev had been in some conflict. He promises to raise them up again and to restore their privileges and prestige. He has pledged himself implicitly to resist the egalitarian trend that has been stirring in the post-Stalinist USSR. His Charter of the Socialist Factory is to be, above all, the Charter of the Factory Manager, who is now given the right—unprecedented in the USSR—to hire and fire workers. He also gains wide discretion in distributing his wages fund among the workers. Nothing, apart from a repetition of the much overworked promise of consumer goods in future abundance, is offered to sweeten the pill for the mass of the workers. It remains to be seen what the reaction to Kosygin's policies will be at the factory level and in the trade unions.

The adoption of these decisions has been a maneuver of some political delicacy. It is not clear just how much support Kosygin has obtained for his moves either in the Presidium or in the Central Committee. His most influential colleagues have behaved in a noncommittal manner. He obviously feared considerable opposition within the Central Committee, and he reduced that opposition to silence by the simple device of inviting many outsiders to the Central Committee's session, a procedure which Khrushchev once favored and which was held against him when he fell. Nor is the postponement of the Party Congress till next year, which is beyond the statutory time limit, a good augury for the present ruling group. Disregard for the Party's statutory rights has, in recent years, been denounced all too often and all too

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loudly as the hallmark of Stalinism!

There is indeed a distinct flavor of Stalinism in some of Kosygin's moves, and the country will hardly relish it. The workers are certain to look askance at the increased powers of the managers. In the capitals of the non-Russian nationalities, people will resent the return of economic power in Moscow. The country as a whole may suspect a shamefaced attempt at something like a bureaucratic Restoration.

It seems quite implausible, despite the failures of Khrushchevism, that the Soviet people should be in a mood for such a Restoration; and if they were, Molotov or Malenkov, rather than Kosygin and Brezhnev, might be the men to preside over it. (Incidentally, there are some signs that Molotov is to be rehabilitated, while Khrushchev remains an "unperson.") And in any case, Kosygin's performance has been politically so ineffective and unconvincing — it has indeed been such a strange mixture of bureaucratic obtuseness and recklessness — that it only underlines the fact that the crisis in Soviet leadership, which opened with Khrushchev's downfall a year ago, is still unresolved.

THE BEST TORTURE

'Once You've Broken Him Down...' Marshall Sahlins

Advanced anti-communism trades places with the enemy. It becomes opposite-communism, and "opposites" are things alike in every respect save one. The final stages of American dissolution in Vietnam will be marked by imitation of the enemy's techniques. I have heard it foreshadowed in the talk of Saigon officialdom: *discipline*, a senior American civilian officer told me, is what the South Vietnamese government needs; *power*, he said, is the only thing the Chinese can understand; *history*, he said, will prove us right. In a remote provincial outpost I found two Americans who had appropriated to their own use draconic Chinese methods of interrogation and indoctrination ("motivation," in the American newspeak). The forced destruction of people's beliefs can no longer properly be described as something "they" do. Torturously exacted confession and conversion are no longer things we fight against. These are now part of our own arsenal, weapons of our own struggle.

The two Americans were leaders of a "motivation" team working among Vietnamese Popular Forces. The team included four Vietnamese instructor-cadres, two of these ex-Vietcong. The dominant of the two Americans was a field representative of a civilian agency; he was assisted by a Special Forces officer. Both were competent in Vietnamese language and custom, and dedicated to Vietnam and their vision of its future. Their program was anti-Communist revolution; they were training Popular Forces as revolutionary cadres. The texts were classic Communist handbooks on revolutionary warfare, books these Americans studied and clearly admired; it does not go too far to say they were disciples, at least revisionist disciples, of Mao Tse-tung, Ho Chi Minh and Che Guevara.

Marshall Sahlins, professor of Anthropology at the University of Michigan, was one of the organizers of the first teach-in, held on the campus of that university. As a result of this activity, Mr. Sahlins visited South Vietnam as a representative of the Inter-University Committee, which sponsored the National Teach-in in Washington on May 15, for debate on foreign policy.

Under these auspices, Mr. Sahlins spent some time last August in Saigon and American outposts in the provinces. This article is a segment of the data he brought home with him.

I lived with them during a night and a good part of a day. They briefed me and allowed me to see the work for myself. But it is not of this guerrilla program that I write. It is of a discussion I had with the Americans about torture and the transformation of Vietcong prisoners to anti-communism. The two Americans made clear that they had some experience with it, and some ideas of how it is properly done.

The interrogation methods, as the Americans themselves explained, are copied from those used most effectively by the Chinese. (Of course, there are other precedents —for example, the Inquisition.) The treatment seems a compressed and abbreviated version of the procedures used on American POWs during the Korean War. The interrogator has at most four or five days before he must send the prisoner on. Physical torture is precluded. A special type of "mental torture" (their term) is instead inflicted. But it aims not merely at eliciting military information. The prisoner's disclosures are at the same time a betrayal of his cause and a confession of his errors, a renunciation of belief.

If the technique really is effective, and the Americans claim that it is, I think it must be because of some rather special qualities of revolutionary warfare and warriors. It must be understood that a Vietcong prisoner comes in with certain comprehensions and expectations that are deeply entwined with his revolutionary ("Communist") commitment. A guerrilla movement depends decisively on secrecy. Its members are visible daily to the enemy, but must be unknown to him. They maintain a hinterland conspiracy of silence, and a single traitor wrecks the organization of a whole village, perhaps a district. The guerrilla thus understands that secrecy is a first principle of the revolution. But by the same token, intelligence becomes a first principle of the counterrevolution. The prisoner, therefore, expects to be tortured for information and ultimately killed if he remains steadfast. He meets his interrogators prepared to resist the worst: it is a test of his revolutionary soul.

Something must be said as well of the two Americans who described the interrogation methods to me. First — and it is a thing seriously to consider — these men are not strangers, not people who have been metamorphosed by some satanic forces to a point beyond

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our understanding or recognition. Met on a college campus or in a business office, they would not attract unusual attention. Their attitudes toward Vietnam are indeed more scholarly than demonic. They want to involve themselves in the country. They profess with sincerity their respect for the people — so much so that they actively wish them a better fate. After I left them I had the sickening feeling of "there but for the grace of God. . . ."

The main protagonist—identified as "Mr. X"—describes himself as an "agnostic atheist," but clearly he believes in the Devil if not in God. In fact, his is a holy work: to exorcise the Communist devils possessing the Vietcong. He undertakes the prisoner's "conversion" for the prisoner's own good; he is "helping" the man, saving him. I ask, "What gives you the right?" "Your belief," he answers. It gives him the right to "proselytize."

And now consider this interview, what they said and what they revealed of themselves. What follows are excerpts from the tape recording I made of our conversation. Three asterisks in the transcript indicate that a portion of the interview is skipped over; three dots, that a portion of an answer is elided; and a word in parenthesis followed by a question mark indicates an imperfect rendering on the tape and my guess of the word involved.

MR. X: At this time [the prisoner] kind of feels an emotional dependence upon you because for two days you've been protecting him from the big outside ugly world that he doesn't understand: feeding him good chow, talking with him, calling him a (*kambelo*?) of the NLF, not the derogatory term of Vietcong. . . . Then you indicate that this nice treatment that he's had so far [has] not been disinterested good treatment, that we expect his cooperation. We're cooperating with him in a sense; we expect cooperation from him. This again reintroduces the whole issue of the big ugly outside world. What's going to happen to him now? Well, he might tell you a couple of things, beginning with rather innocuous things. Well, you can imply that you know that already, what you're really after are better things and this might rather (uncalm?) him. Then you might say, "Jeez, that scrape you got on your shoulder . . . it obviously needs attention; we'll have to give you some penicillin." And while you're giving him the penicillin, you're telling him that, "You know, there are these other types of people who just. . . ."

* * *

MR. X: Actually again, this is the technique that Captain [Y] . . . and myself have been trying to promote in an advisory relationship. Again, it's a technique that's been used most effectively by the Chinese, in which you've pulled the man out of his familiar environment: he's dependent . . . upon you for his continual well-being. And even though the prisoner may (resist?), it's kind of an emotional interdependence that's created, and what you try and do is (use?) this emotional interdependence in such a way that he comes to the point where he *must* tell you what he knows.

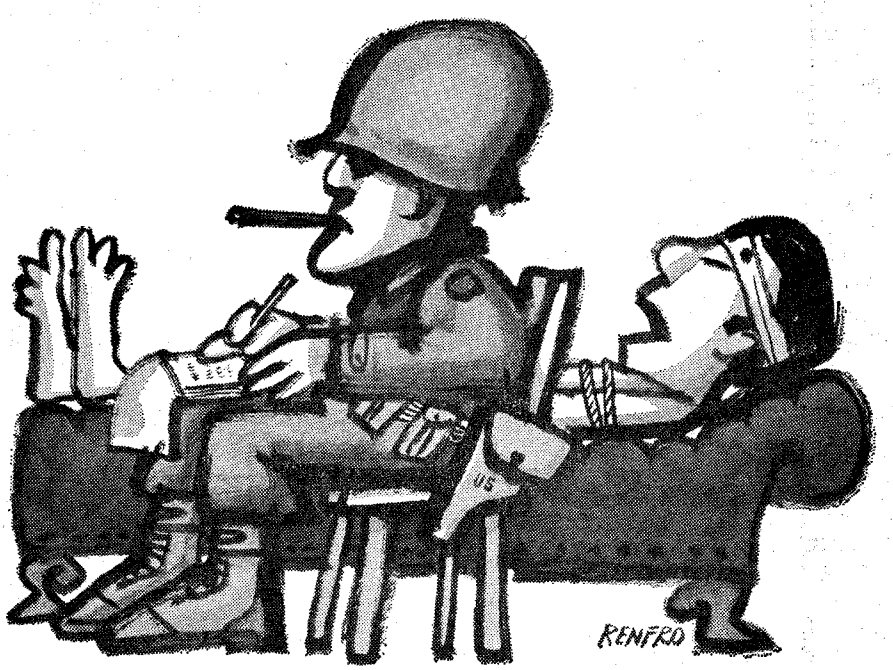
SAHLINS: It's in effect brainwashing—is that the point of this?

MR. X: No, what it is is breaking him down. But . . . once you've broken him down, it comes to the point where he wakes up in a sweat one morning and tells you, "All right." Then he tells you the names of the two people in his cell; or, he gives you the location of the camp that he just recently came from. Then you're through with him, in practical terms. You've got what you needed to continue operating. But at this point, if you really believe in anything yourself, what you've got to do is give him something to hope for before you send him back for further processing. Because you have just brought this individual to the *lowest point in his life* in terms of human meaning and existence. So at that point, that's when you've got to stress that, "Well now, we're releasing you for further processing. But for you, what you've just told us is the beginning of a positive affirmation. We just can't process you right into our unit now, because you don't know what we stand for and what we're fighting for, but we hope that some day you will be joining us." See, we don't have time to get any brainwashing. The Chinese can do that because they have POWs for months and months and months. If we get a guy, we've got him for two to five days, and then he's out of our hands. In that two to five days, we've got to get the information we need. But we will not get the information we need by physical torture. We've got to get it by an emotional and mental torture. And you can do that because that's what they're least adequately prepared for. It's what Americans are least adequately prepared for when they find themselves in the other side's hands.

* * *

SAHLINS: What kind of control do you have over Arvin [Vietnam army] types of interrogation [i.e., physical torture]?

MR. X: Well again, that's an advisory function. And what you're trying to do is—this is just a traditional, feudal Asian society; mainland style—and what you're trying to do is change the course of warfare in Asia. To some extent this has been done: the Chinese People's Liberation army; it's happened probably in the Japanese army, the Japanese Self-Defense and



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Home Defense armies. But until the end of World War II, we always thought of the Japanese army as a real cruel, vindictive bunch of cutthroats. Well it turned out in post-World War II analysis that the Bataan Death March was something that they handled to the best of their ability, given the available transport and the way that they would have handled their own prisoners. They just moved them, and they moved them as fast as they could. People who couldn't keep up the pace in some cases were helped and in some other cases—just according to the individual guard—were bashed and thrown aside. Vietnamese to our eyes seem rather cruel sometimes to prisoners, but they're not doing this with any ideological vengeance. They're doing that because that's just been the bent of warfare in Mainland Asia for a thousand years, and what we have got to try to do is sophisticate it, and tell them, "Look, that's just not the way." It's a slow process; we're attempting a reformation of a whole society.

SAHLINS: What practical is being done to discourage this kind of thing?

MR. X: Well, guidance on the spot—

CAPTAIN D (Sahlins' escort): It's up to the individual advisers—

MR. X: The individual adviser giving guidance on the spot.

CAPTAIN D: Sometimes it's successful, sometimes not—

CAPTAIN Y: In most cases, it's not.

SAHLINS: From what you say about mental torture, you wouldn't make any distinction in the morality of either kind [i.e., physical vs. mental torture]?

MR. X: Hell, no! I don't make any distinction in morality at all: torture is torture, and when you fuck around with a guy's mind and his whole basic *raison d'être*, you're *really* hurting him—especially when he's prepared mentally, spiritually, for the physical torture.

SAHLINS: Then the attempt to discourage Vietnamese water torture . . . is just because the other type doesn't offend American sensibilities as much?

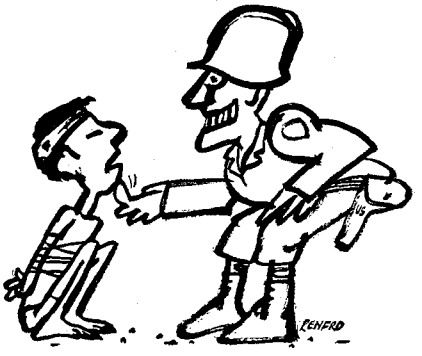
MR. X: No, it's not because of that. Because we don't concern ourselves here with American sensibilities. We concern ourselves with what will work.

CAPTAIN Y: It's relatively ineffective.

MR. X: It's ineffective. It may sound hard-boiled to say that we don't concern ourselves with American sensibilities—but we don't. We're concerning ourselves with Vietnamese sensibilities.

SAHLINS: What about the sensibilities of the Americans who are involved. . . . the person who's torturing?

MR. X: To most of the Americans, to most of the simple-minded Americans who get involved in Vietnam—that's all the *boobus Americanus* that H. L. Mencken spoke about — undoubtedly they think that the mental and emotional torture we're talking about is the least objectionable, because they've never really paused to seriously re-



flect about it themselves; or perhaps they did not go through the experience of being a POW in the Korean conflict themselves. And they can probably tell you, "Oh, Jesus, I'd try and stop that physical torture, because I know it's just wrong"—you know. But we think that we're looking into it a little more deeply, and we see that the mental and spiritual torture that we bring a man through to the point where he voluntarily gives you the information is pretty rough stuff to get involved in too. But it works.

SAHLINS: How do you offset the damage to yourself?

MR. X: Your belief. Your belief: you have to sincerely believe that in the long run you're helping this man. It's like an AA cure. If you're just breaking the guy down for the sake of getting a poor helpless alcoholic who's hipped on NLF propaganda to admit that he was wrong and give you the information, then you're going to send him out in the street a crushed derelict, then there's something wrong with you. But you have to really believe, as we do—although we get discouraged sometimes by our [Vietnamese] counterparts—you have to really believe that you're *helping* this guy to something better.

SAHLINS: Conversion from communism is involved in the torture.

MR. X: Conversion from anything to anything involves a certain degree of self-torture. We just accelerated the process because we need that fucking information.

SAHLINS: This is better for him?

MR. X: He's alive, and you can still help him. . . .

* * *

MR. X: Most Americans, unfortunately, don't bother to think deeply about the stuff they get involved in and they make superficial judgments: "Well, it's wrong to torture this guy physically because we're all part of the same (background?)"—

CAPTAIN Y: If you ask you'll get probably 80 per cent of the people [U.S. military] will say, "Well, I didn't get involved in it. When they capture them, when they capture the Vietnamese Communists, I just turn my back and go and have a cigarette."

MR. X: They take a drink from their canteen and light up a cigarette. And that's discouraging. . . . I'd rather get—not get involved in it, not in the actual physical torture myself—but I'd rather be right there and see it done, and then laugh like a horse when it doesn't work and they don't get the information. And then in the long run you're affecting the situation when you just laugh at this guy and say: "Look, you think he's gonna break? So you cut up his stomach a little bit and his insides fell out. . . . He got the last laugh on you, because he didn't talk a bit." And maybe it'll make the guy think, you know, and ten times later, after ten more people have faded out because he physically tortured them, maybe he'll say: "Okay, wise American adviser, what would you do?" . . . We have a moral responsibility, it seems to me, once we've stepped into this country to involve ourselves in the complete fabric of the country, and to understand it, and then try and help the Vietnamese to look at some different alternatives. . . . We should be acting as a catalyst, as a thinking catalyst in Vietnam. But you cannot be a catalyst unless you know the entire fabric of the thing. And lighting up a cigarette when they bring a prisoner in for questioning is—well, that's an immoral—

CAPTAIN Y: It's just like saying, "It doesn't happen."

MR. X: That's just about the height of immorality, I think. To think that you can just absolve yourself. That's saying that every man *is* an island;

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or at least when it is comfortable, when it's comfortable for me to be an island unto myself, then I am; and the bell's tolling for that poor fucker under the knife, not me. That's real bad. And again, it's a simple-minded approach.

* * *

[Mr. X had mentioned that one of the rules imparted to the cadres in training was "be kind to prisoners." I asked if that wasn't a rule he disobeyed.]

MR. X: Well, if the final result of it is—it's a cruel process—but the result of bringing him closer to you, of conversion—it's a tortuous process of conversion—but the result is a kind one. . . . If you believe in your program, this is what you do. . . .

SAHLINS: Do you believe in breaking people down so they agree with your program? And breaking them down justifies the end?

MR. X: No. . . . That's why we would not take a guy who's been broken directly into our unit at this time. . . .

SAHLINS: Either you will rehabilitate him by converting him to your belief or you're going to leave him a mental wreck. . . . Can your ends be so God-given as to give you this right among humanity to do this?

MR. X: I don't know. I don't really believe anybody's hands are God-given. I'm an agnostic atheist.

SAHLINS: No, your ends. I'm not asking you for religious beliefs. What I'm asking is, do you believe you have the right to impose by this method—

MR. X: I think I've got the right to try. Nobody's got the right to succeed —guaranteed. But everybody's got the right to promote and proselytize what they believe.

* * *

CAPTAIN Y: If we do not break this guy, if we do not attempt to change his ideas, then in essence what have we done? We've said that basically he's right!

SAHLINS: No, that isn't so. One agrees to disagree as a matter of principle in a democratic system.

MR. X: Oh wait, this is [where] we began. . . . I've had some tremendous conversations with these guys, and we begin by agreeing to disagree. But you can soon get this guy so flustered and so shaken up that before he knows it, he's agreeing with you—because his assumptions to begin with were rather vulnerable.

SAHLINS: But that isn't the issue here. The issue here is whether you will impose your will by this technique, which is—

MR. X: We don't know what our will is yet.

SAHLINS: You will impose your ideas by this technique—

MR. X: What ideas?

* * *

SAHLINS: . . . I asked the question, how do you justify the effect upon yourself of acting in this way? And you said you're doing the guy a service. Now, I'm asking you, do you believe you have the right to impose your will on somebody, impose what you believe—

MR. X: We are not imposing our will. We are not imposing will. Even after you've broken him and gotten the information, he's still a free agent.

* * *

MR. X: Not impose will—if he fails to accept . . . an alternative. And not *our* alternative; there are a number of alternatives. Because in essence that's what we're trying to show him.

* * *

SAHLINS: . . . So as a matter of fact by this process you either transform him from that belief into one of a range of acceptable beliefs, or you will leave him a mental wreck—

MR. X: But we don't leave him this way. We have brought him to a point where he realizes that the faith he placed in his previous system was essentially not powerful. He has volunteered the information. At this point he's got to find a new way. He's got to have a way out of his dilemma, and the people at the training centers should be skillful enough to point out to him a number of alternatives.

SAHLINS: We come back to the question: whether you have the right—by these techniques, which are external to him—to deny him [the] belief that he came in with in his hand, and only accept a set of alternatives which you propose?

* * *

MR. X: Listen, I've met guys. . . . We had a guy in Phu Yen Province in the summer of '63 who was the propaganda director for the NLF in that province; and boy, we just worked ourselves literally ragged in four days trying to bring that guy to the point where he'd tell us a few things, and he was tremendous—just tremendous. Didn't tell us a thing.

SAHLINS: You admire this guy?

MR. X: Tremendous—tremendous.

SAHLINS: So you admire more a person who will not acquiesce to the thing that you say is right than one who does?

MR. X: No, not true. I didn't say that at all. I admire a guy who will tortuously admit—if he really believes—that, "Oh Jesus, I never thought about that before. Those guys [NLF] they told me something else; and you're really doing something else." A guy like that who will examine his previously arrived conclusions and change his mind, I admire that—

SAHLINS: That's very admirable, but it doesn't describe the process you went through, which was to leave him in a situation where either he takes this set of alternatives which you give him, or he is a mental wreck.

MR. X: Remember, this was an act of *affirmation* on his part, where he yields the information voluntarily. But it's only a beginning; it's only a beginning; and it's not fair to leave him at the point where he's just made the beginning.

* * *

MR. X: It's just like an alcoholic. An alcoholic can attend the meetings and he can see everybody else get embarrassed; and if he doesn't want to join them he can just back out again. But once a guy begins to join this little society of alcoholics—

CAPTAIN Y: These cadres we have [as instructors]—these ex-VC, ex-NLF, ex-Viet Minh—they all in some way or another gave up something in their own mind when they turned, came to the government.

* * *

MR. X: . . . what we're trying to show these guys when we're interrogating them, through this tortuous process, is that you're not better [off] under the NLF. "Your whole series of assumptions has got to be re-examined here, and we're here to help you re-examine them. And, Jesus, there's some guys here have got some more basic ideas of how they'd like to examine you, but we're just holding these guys off . . . and we'll take good care of you." That's kind of a dirty trick—[but] when you've only got four days. . . .

SAHLINS: Have you done this with Vietcong?

MR. X: We don't do anything because we're advisers—in every sense.

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PLAYS AND POLITICS . . . . . Harold Clurman

To the question, "What has the American theatre to say at the present time about the state of American politics?" the answer is "very little." The question which might then more pointedly be put is "Why?" Those who ask either of these questions are usually more interested in politics than in the theatre. Still, they are good questions for people devoted to the theatre to ask themselves. The effort to answer will momentarily make them ponder politics and also induce them to think a little less superficially about the theatre.

In any discussion of the theatre one of the first things to inquire about is the nature of the audience. On Broadway, where most new plays originate in America, the audience never pays less than $2.50 for the poorest seat, and often more than $6.90 for the best. One can hardly call this a representative audience, even in the era of affluence. It excludes most teachers and students, many professional people who are not in the high income brackets, and what used to be called the "working class." It is an audience of the business community: manufacturers, buyers and moguls of the plushier trades. It demands titillation. Hence musicals and light comedies are almost the only shows which sell out. The economic setup of the New York theatre makes it extremely difficult for plays that don't sell out to return a profit. And what doesn't make money soon disappears. What is believed likely to disappear doesn't get produced.

This facile explanation tells less than half the story. To proceed beyond it leads to perilous ground. I have no statistics, but I venture to say that Americans are not genuinely concerned with politics.

The ordinary American might define politics as something to do with elections and graft. He is convinced that China is a menace, that communism is evil, that taxes are too high, that juvenile delinquency is outrageous, that while the atom bomb is dangerous it is necessary, that our way of life, being the best, must be defended. Politics is something to which one lends oneself for a few minutes a day on TV, or can be disposed of by a cursory glance at the headlines and by gossip about "personalities." Politics is a sort of sport, and no one except a politician needs to devote himself to it.

This view is understandable, given our history. There have been very few deeply disturbing political events since 1865. Compared to its effects on Europe, the First World War was for us a mere scratch. Such scandals as those of the Harding administration or of the Jimmy Walker regime were jokes. A mere handful of people were aware of the implications of Franco's assault on democratic Spain. To judge by the aspect of our big cities at the time, the Second World War was a happy occasion. We disapproved of fascism because of its bluster, and we heartily disliked the Nazis because they produced sick-making sensations in our stomachs. The cause of the war, our own or our Allies' responsibility in its outbreak, were obscure to us.

The depression of 1929-39 shook us up. For a time we responded politically although, the crisis once passed, many of us grew impatient with Roosevelt and his reforms. But the depression was a condition no one could overlook, and our theatre gave striking evidence of the fact.

Came Eisenhower, the new normalcy and McCarthy. The Senator scared the wits out of us before he destroyed himself, and we have not yet recovered from the infection he spread. For years, now, not only political discussion but all discussion of vital issues has been timorous or feeble. Such discussion may lead to dissent. Nowadays we hardly know what to dissent from except such enormities as totalitarianism, the insults of inimical powers, narcotics and teen-age killers. Dissent usually involves criticism of our country, than which there is none better on earth. Dissent, moreover, smacks of softness toward foreign ideologies. We had enough of that in the thirties.

Today the civil rights struggle —especially in its painless forms— stirs a great many people. But when prejudice of this stamp is dealt with on the stage it is in a musical like *West Side Story* or in a sentimental play like *A Raisin in the Sun*. Nearly everybody, and especially those who are peculiarly touchy about aesthetics, shudders at the hate in LeRoi Jones's plays. I myself am frightened and mortified by it, but we occasionally need to realize its presence and to see it dramatized in full terror.

We hear that there is a new

The Apple Cart

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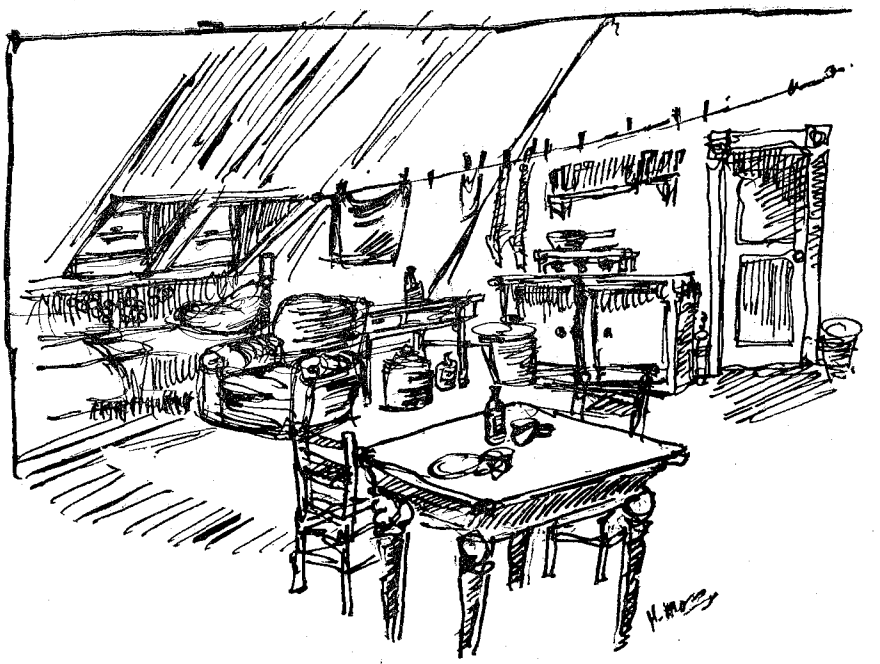
radicalism in the colleges and among the young who are exasperated by the flatness, the inexpressiveness of our lives. Though the manifestations of this trend are sometimes raw and foolish, it should be viewed as a hopeful sign if it leads to the discipline of study, thought and firmness of conviction. Nerviness is not enough.

The fighting in Vietnam troubles us and we are becoming increasingly vocal about it. The majority of our countrymen react automatically, either approving the government's policy as a matter of simple patriotism, or denouncing it without facing the central issue: whether or not the possible victory of communism in Asia is something that non-Communists are prepared to accept.



Look Back in Anger

If I am only partly right in these assertions, politics as such can hardly be expected to prove a proper subject for American theatrical entertainment. But should I be thought mistaken there are still other phases of the question which the liberal mind often overlooks.

Granted that plays dealing with politics on our stage usually are reduced to such convivial dramatizations of columnist chatter as *The Best Man* or to empty melodrama like the play made from Allen Drury's *Advise and Consent*, one must also recognize that very few political plays of more than momentary value exist in dramatic literature generally. What we sometimes name political plays are more accurately plays of social significance or historical plays of broad political application.

Shaw wrote several political plays — *The Apple Cart, Geneva, On the Rocks* — but they are hardly among his best. Shakespeare's Histories possess general political meaning, but they are political only by extension and analogy, as is the case with Miller's *The Crucible*, Sherwood's *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*, Kingsley's *The Patriots*. There are also social-political "allegories," written in various veins, like most of Sartre's plays or Genet's *The Balcony* and *The Screens*.

Not long ago a play about the Hiss case was produced on Broadway but, like most such accounts of recent events, it was an inconsiderable piece. Only the Germans and French have thus far accepted a stage version of the Oppenheimer case. Even Kingsley's dramatization of Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*, cited as the Best Play of the Year 1950-51 by the New York Drama Critics' Circle, remained largely inoperative. I could name several other similar plays, like Maxwell Anderson and Harold Hickerson's *Gods of the Lightning* (about the Sacco-Vanzetti case) or John Wexley's *They Shall Not Die* (about the Scottsboro boys) which flashed by without attracting anything but the most limited attention.

Far more effective than any of these were the documentaries presented by the Federal Theatre Project at low prices — *Triple-A Plowed Under* and *One-Third of a Nation*—which produced audience impact through their novel staging and immediacy. But for the popular treatment of topical subjects the movies and television are more appropriate media. Even Odets' *Waiting for Lefty* (about the taxi drivers' strike in the thirties) proved forceful not because of its political message but because of its colorful idiom and youthful fervor. For the rest, with the exception of his anti-Nazi *Till the Day I Die*, Odets' plays are not political at all but social, akin in this respect to O'Casey's early work.

A social play stems from a particular environment which to a degree is a reflection of a political condition. Chekhov's plays and Shaw's *Heartbreak House* are examples. Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* has English social connotations though its political direction is by no means clear. Gorky's dramatic work, rightly held to be inflammatory in Czarist Russia, was not at all propaganda for a particular party or a guide to an unequivocal political solution.

Since all plays are the products of mores and attitudes common to particular sectors of society and are addressed to a public presumed to be attuned to the dramatists' state of mind, one might maintain that all plays are social. (Even *The Ziegfeld Follies*, I have often said, could be regarded as a mirror of its times.) The reason why the social basis of drama is not more often pointed out is that audiences and reviewers prefer to think of plays wholly in terms of entertainment or, betimes, of art. In this way they avoid the discomfort of dealing with troublesome matters. They want to divorce entertainment (or art) from their daily concerns. The wish is justifiable, since their concerns are often trivial, but by this amputation they frequently rob both entertainment and art of their primary value.

There is a sense in which the theatregoer who seeks relief from his workaday cares is right. The domain of the theatre is universal, nothing human is alien to it; but the most durable and hence most profoundly influential plays are those which transcend their immediate "journalistic" material. What

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we seek finally in the theatre is an escape—into reality.

Our ordinary activities are dross of transitory interest even to ourselves. What we truly long for is to be transported to some realm of truth, the purest consciousness. This super-reality which lifts us above the ordinary traffic of existence is what the theatre (along with the other arts and, some may add, religion) aspires to, and in its greatest and rare occasions achieves.

What makes Chekhov's plays so touching is not their depiction of the unhappy middle class of Russia at a certain period, but the use he makes of this subject matter. From it he wrings the "music" of idealistic yearning, the aspiration which both torments and elevates the hearts of not particularly bright folk everywhere. What lends stature to Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler* is not so much the psychology of a lady caught between two social classes, but our recognition that we are all a little like her —unable to find any sphere which satisfies our innermost needs.

Plays of so-called classic breadth, from Aeschylus to Racine, attain such heights. The better realistic plays of modern times move willy-nilly toward the same goals. Patently social plays, like those of Shaw and Brecht, Büchner's *Danton's Death* or Hauptmann's *The Weavers*, are sustained by a similar afflatus. Political plays, if they are intelligent and honest (Hochhuth's *The Deputy*), are to be welcomed even when they do not qualify as art. How many plays of any sort do? Still the annals of drama teach us that specifically political plays seldom reach the loftiest peaks—unless one calls *Trojan Women* or *Julius Caesar* "political."

Nearly all social plays of merit exercise political effect, although the degree or exact orientation of such effects are not always determinable. We may cite such old examples as Beaumarchais' *Marriage of Figaro* as relevant to the French Revolution and Gogol's *The Inspector General* as relevant to all bureaucracies. There is no doubt that the naturalistic plays of the middle and late 19th century exerted liberalizing persuasion, first in Germany and Russia, and later in England and France. On the other hand, a sizable portion of the Paris audience just before the Second World War applauded Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* as a reactionary play which others (Brecht, for instance) have interpreted in another sense.

We come now to what for our present purpose is the crucial problem: "How is one to account for the fact," a friend writes me, "that the more dramatic the general political situation becomes, the more intensely private and ingrown are the preoccupations of our more talented playwrights?"

The answer is that the plays referred to in this query, though hardly political, constitute our social drama! There *is* a connection between the theatre and politics. It is sometimes direct and positive; at other times indirect and negative. Today it is mostly negative. The Theatre of the Absurd, seen as a generic phenomenon without judgment as to individual talents, is, whether the writers themselves agree or not, a direct consequence of the social-political climate in most of the "free world." It represents despair and sometimes an oblique protest in regard to the societies from which the plays emerge. They are mockingly bitter outcries signifying a sense of impotence. They present our world as a frightful mess, a ridiculous fraud; a tragic farce. There is nothing left for us to do, they tell us, except to suffer and wait (for what?), jeer and try to avoid hurting anyone or, in extreme instances, burst the bonds of decorum and reason (which have been of no avail) to find some sado-masochistic "mystical" release. America, they intimate, is smug and hypocritical. Britain's stiff upper lip has gone slack with indecision, France poses in a caricature of grandeur. The Soviet Union abides in a strait jacket; China is a threatening tyranny. According to some of these playwrights it is entirely possible that life itself is no damned good and probably never has been. So they turn their backs on all this and now and then seek repose within some no man's land of bleak contemplation or lunacy.

I do not speak in contempt. Today many artist-intellectuals (not to mention others) feel spiritually homeless. They believe themselves deprived of any reliable political, social, religious base. For them all the old faiths are meaningless. That is why in America they appear to take special satisfaction in patronizing the credulous thirties. Their political posture consists of their refusal to assume any. And, one should add, no wonder. The moral and political atmosphere of the world is confusing everywhere. It is easier to assail these new and personally benign nihilists by argument than to reassure them with concrete proposals. The most "advanced" among them are trying to formulate an aesthetics of non-art.

Insofar as these impulses represent protestations against all that is bogus in our society, and if in the process of protest new means of expression are discovered, this anarchic tendency performs a positive function. But a persistent turning away from the world ultimately leads to a conformism as dull and debilitating as accommodation.

Very few of the new plays have any action. Indeed hardly any of them require it, because they deal with states of being in which will power has become superfluous. Since most such plays are based on the assumption that nothing is changeable, they present characters who never bother to change any-

The Deputy

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thing. We approach the dead end of drama.

To extricate himself from this dilemma the future playwright must consent to dwell in "error." He must take a walk into the awful world, get to know it ever more intimately and widely. What is chiefly wrong with Soviet realism is that it is not sufficiently realistic. It is usually little more than publicity. Still the aims of that realism, liberated from officious supervision and Philistine dogma, are healthy. They bid the dramatist make contact with society, explore the hardships and triumphs of labor, probe the souls of men and women in the travail of the new civilization as it is being formed, or of the old as it destroys itself. This tradition gave Russia and the rest of us such writers as Gogol, Turgenev, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Chekhov and Gorky—none of them literalists—and has still much to offer.

As soon as they have attracted notice through early success, American playwrights now tend to become encrusted in professional circles and thus rapidly to detach themselves from their creative sources. They deteriorate into provincials in the sterile ground of fashionable Broadway intellectual coteries.

When we learn to see ourselves and our neighbors truthfully against the broadest horizons of human concern, we shall perhaps not need to clamor for *political* plays; good ones will do.

British Peace Movement

LOOKING for the MARCHERS

Theodore Roszak

When I left the United States in the summer of 1964 to become the first American editor of *Peace News* in London, the great question among my friends and colleagues was: whatever happened to the American peace movement? It was a question accompanied by that kind of morose, self-defensive soul-searching which never seems to yield satisfactory answers. For those who were part of it, the American peace scene for the years 1963-64—during that paralytic lull following the partial test-ban treaty and preceding the recent, turbulent rise of the "New Left"—was rapidly suffocating in pessimism and dismal introspection.

Would England be any better? I had hoped so, but much to my dismay it was not. The same dragged-out self-analyses, the same dejection and frustrated back-biting had, I soon discovered, all but crowded the British movement off the political stage. If anything, the gloom was even greater. For in America, we could at least doubt that there had ever really been a "movement" to mourn for; maybe we had never been more than a handful—a game, outspoken remnant that had generated a few good rallies, some eye-catching newspaper advertisements and several organizational titles, and that had been lucky enough to get some exaggerated publicity. (One always felt a bit queasy about the fact that so many American peace organizations seemed to share the same few New York and Philadelphia addresses, and too frequently used one another's stationery.)

But in England there could be no doubt about the matter: there really had been a movement. Year after year, from 1958, the great Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament had mustered twenty, fifty, 100,000 people to its Easter rallies in Trafalgar Square. The Committee of 100, CND's maverick, direct-action offshoot, had more than once filled the streets of Whitehall with anywhere between 5,000 and 12,000 sitters-in that included dozens of British intellectual and cultural celebrities among its militant rank and file. The trials of the civilly disobedient "100" had injected magnificent statements of conscience into the British courts and press. And in 1960, CND unilateralism, stubbornly supported by several labor leaders and their unions (especially Frank Cousins of the giant Transport and General Workers Union), had succeeded in "winning over" the Labour Party at its Scarborough conference. Of course, Hugh Gaitskell and the party leadership never endorsed the unilateral nuclear-disarmament plank thrust upon them at Scarborough and did manage the following year to prove Labour's "fitness to govern" by replacing it with a more "responsible" position on the bomb and NATO. But still, imagine! The movement had actually captured the major opposition party. For some three years at least the Campaign put disarmament on Britain's political map, and jolted its society into a short, sharp interval of moral awareness and frantic debate far more searching than any discussion Americans have ever had on nuclear warfare.

But now—well, take for example this: In England my family shared a north London cooperative housing project with four other families—beautifully conscientious people who had worked tirelessly to bring the H. G. Wells Housing Cooperative into existence, and with whom we struck up warm friendships. We lived right next door for three months before we discovered—and then inadvertently—that two of the couples had been in the thick of Committee of 100 activities. They had been in the sit-downs, had been arrested and jailed along with Bertrand Russell and the other great names. Yes, they recalled, those were exciting days. But now they never talked about it much, were out of touch, inactive, didn't even subscribe to the paper I edited. What was it that had subtracted them so silently and completely from a movement for which they had risked so much? They couldn't be sure . . . somehow the steam had gone out of it all . . . there had been too much factional infighting . . . the wives had had babies . . . the issues had gotten less clear-cut . . . and it wasn't as if the British bomb meant that much any more . . . other worth-while causes (like cooperative housing) had taken their attention . . . things had just changed. . . .

Their answers were typical.

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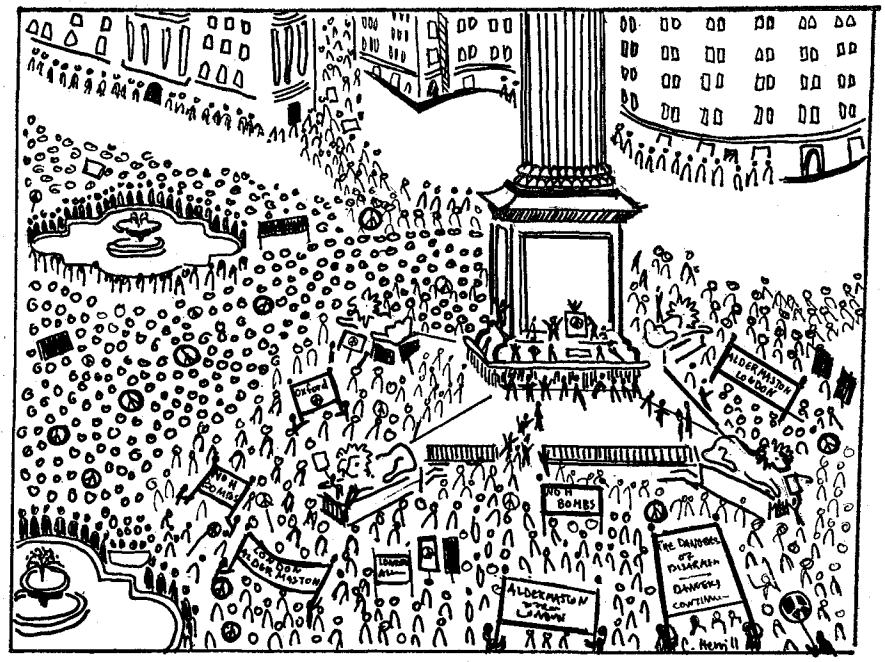
Everywhere in my work I came across people who had been part of the great crusade, and had drifted away. Both the Campaign and the Committee had just seemed to go limp and lose staying power. Even militant members and one-time leaders had seemed to vanish from the scene: to take up other causes, to return to school or family cares, to do research or write books. People wondered now what had become of colleagues they had once been imprisoned with. Among those who stayed close to the movement, the general elections which kept threatening throughout most of 1964-65 seemed a more important priority. Here was the great chance to get Labour elected after thirteen years out of power — and wasn't that what CND was all about?



CND's unrequited love affair with the Labour Party is far too complicated to be rehearsed at any length here. There had always been those—in the Campaign leadership as well as the rank and file—whose first allegiance was to Labour and for whom electing Labour was the Campaign's first goal. Canon John Collins, CND's first chairman, had never been ambiguous about that. And still today, the Campaign's capable and amiable chairman, Olive Gibbs, and its hard-as-nails general secretary, Peggy Duff, both hold local office (in Oxford and London) for Labour. The magic that Labour, with its great evangelical tradition of social justice and its awesome intellectual backing, holds for English radicals is something an American finds difficult to appreciate. At CND rallies the mere mention of Keir Hardie still draws a storm of applause. And for peaceniks it is impossible to forget how many of Labour's great leaders had been outspoken religious pacifists: Ramsey MacDonald, Philip Snowden, George Lansbury. Indeed, the editor's office at *Peace News* is named "The George Lansbury Room." And, though I could take no inspiration from it, there hung above my desk all year a smiling portrait of that good, gray man whose pacifism had so embarrassed Labour during the thirties, that the party finally removed him from the leadership in favor of Clement Atlee (who as a "responsible" leader, was to initiate Britain's own A-bomb program in 1948).

But there are many others who never understood CND to be a wheel horse hitched to Labour's wagon; nor simply a pressure group feeding ginger to Labour's left wing. Rather the Campaign was . . . well, perhaps the beginning of a broadly radical "New Left," drawing inspiration from the rebellious broadsides that Angry Young Men were firing at the entire structure and character of British society in the wake of the Suez fiasco; perhaps the rudiments of a rival party that should be running independent candidates for Parliament in as many constituencies as possible; perhaps, through the Committee of 100, the beginning of a nonviolent social revolution. From the very outset, the ideological tastes of the university-based New Left Clubs — too doctrinally Socialist to gain acceptance from the Labour leadership—have circulated through the Campaign freely. And so also has the amorphous social alienation of British youth, which could never be reconciled to Labour's dowdiness or to the cautious paternalism that characterizes the party's youth groups.

It is difficult now not to believe they were right, those who refused to give their hearts to Labour and who wanted more, much more, than a Labour victory at the earliest possible election. For now Labour is in power, and the party could not be more thoroughly infiltrated than it is by Campaigners or former Campaigners. Frank Cousins, Anthony Greenwood, Barbara Castle are all in the cabinet. Stephen Swingler and Harold Davies hold junior positions in the government. And the Parliamentary party includes between seventy and eighty MPs who marched faithfully from Aldermaston to Trafalgar Square every Easter. But still the "independent deterrent" (purchased now from America) remains in Britain's arsenal and Britain remains in NATO. Of "positive neutralism" and "unilateralism" one hears nothing from Whitehall. What one does hear, agonizingly enough, is unending sycophantic endorsement of American policy in Southeast Asia, and Kipling quoted to celebrate Britain's embarrassing involvement in Malaysia. To all of which CND and its Left Labour allies object heartily—but still not strenuously enough to rock the government's boat.

In March of this year, Frank Allaun — an old Campaigner — resigned his position in the cabinet in order to associate himself with the seventy-five or 100 Labour MPs who have been constantly, though not aggressively, protesting the party's Vietnam policy. But that's as much of a dent in party discipline as the Campaign has achieved — or desired. After all, Labour's majority is down to two, and the party hasn't had a chance yet to make a showing of its progressive domestic policies. One wouldn't want to put the Tories back in power, would one?

Meanwhile, the breakaway Com-

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mittee of 100 survives as a heroic few, surrounded by an obstreperous few more. Most of its great names have departed. Lord Russell has disowned the child that he and the young American expatriate Ralph Schoenman (now Russell's personal secretary) created, but only to become a largely unattended, thoroughly predictable voice that speaks too often on too many issues. His own peace foundation (like so many others in the American and British movements, Lord Russell and his secretarial entourage seem to have retired from politics into research) purports to be doing great things, but its achievements and general purposes remain obscure. Lord Russell's most responsive public seems now to be among the rebellious Asian and African political movements to whose conferences he frequently sends representatives or tape-recorded messages that are dependably and fiercely anti-Western.

The surviving "100," brimming with youthful exuberance, periodically picket the American Embassy, sometimes for excellent and sometimes for mysterious reasons. In one very impressive show of courage, a small band of the 100 turned out to stage a counter-demonstration last March in the presence of 5,000 angry aircraft workers who had assembled in Hyde Park to protest the government's cancellation of several bomber and fighter plane contracts. (Sad to say, Labour, despite six years of peace activity in Britain aimed especially at it, explained the cancellations wholly as an economy move, and voiced not a single word in behalf of disarmament.) But Committee of 100 chapter meetings tend to be marred by dissension and a kind of amateurish, overdone militancy. And its current exercises in direct action are often of dubious political and moral quality. For several weeks this year the Committee's journal, *Resistance*, was seeking to whip up support for what it calls "telephone sabotage": *Resistance* prints the phone numbers of unlisted government agencies which members are then urged to call and, under assumed names, to bug with all sorts of false information . . . and then hang up quickly before the call can be traced! Thus, the passive resister yields to the prankster.

Peace movements are transitory and delicate blossoms. They bloom almost overnight in a climate of crisis, take on the most nearly impossible of crusades—that of resisting international war—and wither quickly when they fail to succeed all at once in their superhuman mission. It is very likely the sign of its demise when any political movement slows down sufficiently to permit having history books written about it. And with the publication late last year of Christopher Driver's *The Disarmers*, CND and the Committee of 100 found themselves packaged neatly in a very competent history, which ended with the conviction that the Aldermaston marchers have "hung up their boots." At Easter this year CND still turned out 30,000 supporters in Trafalgar Square — but even this achievement did not dispel the uncertainty and gloom of many. To a very large degree the rally succeeded because it spoke much more of the American war in Vietnam than of the Campaign's old ideals of banning the bomb and getting out of NATO.

It is a depressing account, and of course the situation was bound to leave its mark on the fortunes of the paper I edited. During the thirties and forties, when it was the voice of the charismatic Rev. Dick Sheppard and his Peace Pledge Union, *Peace News* was a high-circulation weekly, widely read and recognized (and despised) as the organ of a worrisomely large peace movement that had persuaded considerably more than 100,000 young men to refuse conscription in any future war. During the war years, times were hard for *PN*; news dealers refused to carry it, and at one point, when printers refused to handle the paper, the famous sculptor and fine-arts printer, Eric Gill, had to step in to set several copies of *PN* by hand at his own press. (They are now collectors' items.) But still circulation remained high and even Fleet Street carefully followed the war commentaries of *PN's* prestigious editor, the critic and social philosopher, John Middleton Murry; it was the best and most responsible dissenting opinion on the excesses of "unconditional surrender" and "saturation bombing" available.

Now *PN*, one of the veritable institutions of the peace movement, a publication that can claim Aldous Huxley and Bertrand Russell, Gandhi and Jayaprakash Narayan, Danilo Dolci and Herbert Read, Alex Comfort and H. G. Wells, Vera Brittain, Max Plowman and George Lansbury among its one-time voluntary contributors, and through whose pages three decades of the heroism and folly of the Western peace movement have played themselves out, may be approaching the end of its days. "Cause journals" have no more life in them than the movements they speak for. And in Britain, at least, it is difficult to tell for whom a peace journal ought to speak: the old-style religious pacifists with their taste for hot-gospeling testimonials and high ethical sentiment, the disgruntled anarchist youth who believe that any "movement" that numbers more than twenty-seven people has lost its ideological virginity, the peace research intellectuals for whom political action at any time before 1980 is bound to be "premature," the social-issues activists for whom everything but war is worth talking about — stubbornly exclusive audiences all, and presently lacking any great project that can subordinate the differences dividing them. The tack I tried—which was simply to open a forum for all comers and wait for a new movement to crystallize out of the debate and the "objective situation"—was, alas, not a solution that satisfied many. And *PN* is a "cause journal" the like of which we do not have in the United States. Even its sales are in the hands of voluntary street sellers, a quaint old British custom that sends the faithful of various political movements out to hawk their journals on street corners even in the rain of the English winter. A lovely grass-roots tradition, but pity the poor editor whose policies alienate the loyal sellers! Lose a seller (and I lost many) and you lose 200 sales.

Is there anything Americans can learn from the recent history of the British peace movement? Very little, I fear. For the British movement has been gifted and cursed with a peculiar institution that has no counterpart in America: the British Labour Party.

The essential problem of any peace movement, which invariably begins as a tightly knit, often reli-

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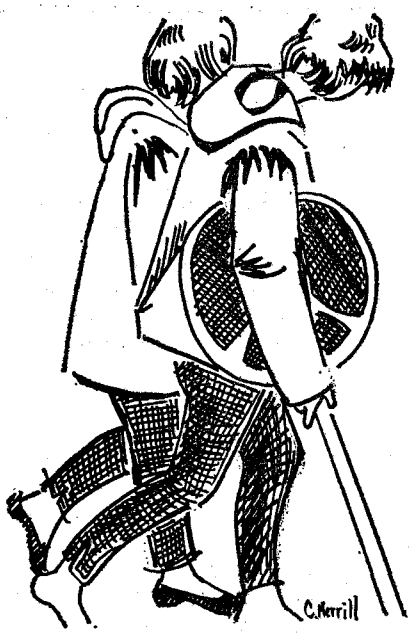

gious cause group, is that of converting the "gentile" public — and this the group must do by the sheer force of ideas and ideals. Unlike labor, Socialist, feminist, or racial-justice movements that deal in the bread-and-butter grievances of majority groups, or at least large-sized minorities, peace movements may often have to demand highly principled, altrustic sacrifices of those to whom they appeal. War resistance is not readily translated into concrete, immediate and personally advantageous objectives—not until war is imminent, and that is usually too late. Only when the movement can make its goals seem immediate—as in the case of bomb testing with its intimate danger of atmospheric pollution — can large numbers be easily mustered.

There are essentially two gentile publics to whom the movement must speak if it is to grow: the workers and socially disadvantaged, and the great complacent middle class. Thus, in America, Turn Toward Peace was created to permeate the ordinarily uninvolved and indifferent middle class, by way of the leadership of its many voluntary organizations: church groups, professional associations, etc. And, more recently, Students for a Democratic Society has sought to work the war-peace issue into the consciousness of the disadvantaged minorities and disorganized down-and-outs of our society. The fact that these two groups seem not to understand that they are addressing themselves to very different publics and must deal with very different problems in doing so is a great misfortune. The objectives of *both* TTP and SDS make sense — because neither of the publics they are dealing with is adequately embraced by or hopelessly integrated into the existing political parties. Besides, the rhetoric of the New Frontier and the Great Society notwithstanding, nothing that looks much like idealism or ideology stands a sporting chance of slipping by the gates of the Democratic or Republican establishments. If folk singers are the bards of our New Left, it bears some thinking upon that the only songs they sing about the major parties are sung for satirical effect.

But in Britain, there is the Labour Party, and it guards the political Left impregnably, a Gibraltar of working-class aspiration, proletarian heroism, artistry and intellect. It has thoroughly integrated the larger and more militant British working class — and it has, through its more moderate welfare statism, done an effective job of attracting middle-class allegiance. Moreover, and very importantly, Labour retains the aura of a crusading "Cause party" of tremendous moral persuasion and intellectual support. Here, seemingly, is the royal road to the hearts and votes of the British gentile public. So it was inevitable that the peace movement should try to win its way by first "taking over" this one great national powerhouse and, upon Labour's election, the government itself. The feasibility of this strategy is of course enhanced by the fact that in Britain a political party, upon taking over the government with a decent majority, is practically omnipotent in the formulation of policy: there are no troublesome Congressional checks and balances. What then could be a more obvious strategy?

But that strategy failed in its ultimate objective, and so did the Committee of 100's direct-action alternative. With their failures, the peace movement was stranded without a political vehicle. In America, the gentile public does not come as conveniently packaged as in England; that makes getting at it so much the harder, but it also makes peace politics here less an all-or-nothing proposition.

One great exception to Labour's broad embrace and humanitarian reputation should be mentioned. That is its abysmal record on the very new domestic issue of race relations. By supinely taking over the Tories' policy of severe immigration restriction, and by failing to speak boldly to the worsening problem of color discrimination, Labour is alienating whatever adherents it once had among Britain's 800,000 Indian, West Indian and Pakistani immigrants. It is a disgraceful display and has left a tragic vacuum in the political organization of the immigrants. Does this provide an alliance for the peace movement? Some think so, and with this possibility in mind, a group of us, a few Committee of 100 veterans and a few immigrant spokesmen, began late in 1964 a small operation called "Multiracial Britain." Then, with a really important assist from Martin Luther King and Bayard Rustin — who stopped off for two days in London last November on their way to Oslo where Dr. King was to receive the Nobel Peace Prize — Multiracial Britain metamorphosed into the larger and more representative Campaign Against Racial Discrimination. CARD still functions as the voice of moderation in Britain's racial problem, but has lost ground to more militant groups and, unhappily, no longer has any connection with the peace movement.

Where, then, does the British movement go from here? For it is important that the British movement survive and progress. Britain's voice in the world is far from negligible; moreover, because of their imperial experience and Commonwealth connections, the British could play at least as great a role as the French presently do in contributing some sophistication and insight to America's heavy-handed dealings with the Third World—where, it now seems clear, the major danger to peace will lie in the next few generations.

It was my own conviction that neither CND nor the Committee of 100 has anywhere to go *unless* they radically recast themselves — and emerge with a broad program that presses forward on a number of domestic and foreign issues. It is quite hopeless at this point for any group to compete head-on with the major parties for mass appeal, since both Labour and the Tories have subscribed to advanced welfare-state policies that cover all the

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most obvious grievances of their society. But the welfare state is a large-meshed net that provides social security at the expense of letting many more subtle human needs drop through. Race relations, minority rights in general (and Britain's minorities, only now becoming visible to the society, include some exotic groups like Greek Cypriots, Armenians and Gypsies) is a very apparent "drop through" issue. So are many of the problems that beset old people and juveniles, the bored residents of many of the "new towns" and of the often culturally slack provinces, ex-convicts and the families of men still in prison, widows without family, orphans, derelicts. In fact, the whole problem of alienation, in an industrial society in all its disheartening forms, lies beyond the welfare state.

In all these scattered puddles of social inadequacy there are people whose lives can't be touched or mended, but only worsened, by the manipulation of expert social engineers. What we need to stabilize and enrich the lives of these alienated many is that "participative democracy" our own New Left is so concerned to bring about at every level of American society—and it is so new and subtle a project that we scarcely have as yet the political rhetoric with which to discuss it. In Britain as in America, when political parties talk about anything worth while at all, it is the bread-and-butter issues — which is the stuff man does not live alone by.

Can there be a politics beyond the welfare state? In Britain those I met who are talking most imaginatively about it are the contributors to the *New Left Review*, and the people Colin Ward manages to draw into his little monthly, *Anarchy*. And those who are doing the most about it are the "activist sociologists" whom the remarkable Richard Hauser has organized into the Center for Group Studies in London. Insisting that there must be no research that does not lead to action, and no action that does not stem from thorough research, Hauser, who is perhaps best known for the "Hauser Report" on homosexuality which he prepared for the Home Office, has managed to set in motion several scores of self-help projects among Britain's convicts, abandoned widows, orphans, disadvantaged minorities and social misfits. His object is always the same: to find among the disorganized and inadequate the resourcefulness that will allow them to solve their own problems—and so form themselves into a "fraternal society" that can make its own way in the world. A student of Gandhi's philosophy and techniques, Hauser believes that this kind of activity could provide the bridge across which the peace movement might travel toward its goal of international conciliation. One must, he contends, begin rooting out violence where it is nearest at hand in order to test and perfect the methods of nonviolent problem solving. Then, perhaps, the peace movement could undercut the Labour Party and find the allies it needs. It was the most hopeful prospect I came across in Britain, and its implications for the American peace scene are quite as great.

What It Means To Be An American

Editing a little journal for a noble cause teaches one many things—and not a little about human folly. There was, for example, the strange young man from the fringes of the Committee of 100 who showed up in my office one afternoon and tried to convince me that he had successfully "infiltrated" the Ministry of War and swiped the plans for Britain's entire air-defense system. Wouldn't I love to publish them in *PN* as a blow for peace? And then there was the little old Quaker lady who, upon discovering that I was an American, appealed to me to get in touch with the oil tycoon, J. Paul Getty, at his Dover home, and please to ask him for $1 million so that she could stage an international festival for children and their pets at the Albert Hall. Mr. Getty, I was to understand, loved children (and small animals) and would surely come across if a fellow countryman were to ask him.

But by far the most impressive lesson I bring away from London has nothing directly to do with *Peace News* or the movement. Still, I cannot forgo relating the single experience that added most to my political understanding.

While in London I did a number of interviews at the B.B.C. for the Pacifica stations, one of them with two South African exiles. One hears a great deal more about South Africa in England than in America—and it all adds up to the picture of a regime so brutal and despotic that one must look to Hitler's Germany to find a society of comparable criminality. The two young men I spoke with—one, an exceptionally talented poet, the other, a journalist—had many stories to tell of the discrimination and degradation they and their families had undergone, living as dispossessed blacks in a country they had never been able to call their own. Neither spoke with bitterness, but rather with an indignation that had cooled and solidified into calm defiance. Both were sworn to return to their society to fight when the inevitable revolution came.

Was there no chance of a nonviolent solution in South Africa? It was a question both were familiar with. No, there was no chance. The government had shattered the nonviolent forces and their leaders; the Verwoerd regime would never be softened or won over by an appeal to conscience. Nor would the Western governments — primarily Britain and the United States—that keep Verwoerd in business, but which have the power, by way of economic boycott, to shatter the apartheid system.

Would they, I asked, accept weapons and support for their struggle from Communist sources? Yes, from *any* source. "But," I asked, with an embarrassment that was all too obvious, "if you accept Communist help, you must know that America will side against you." They both looked at me quizzically and answered, with some amusement: "Of course. But, in any case, which side does an African or Asian expect America to be on?"

If only they had said that bitterly, angrily, brutally, I might perhaps have accepted it as an understandable, but wrong-headed and fanatical outburst. But these were not fanatics. They were gentle, intelligent, quietly proud young men. And in fact they spoke admiringly of many things I mentioned about America. But when I spoke of America's relationship to their struggle in South Africa, they replied with confident simplicity, as if I had suggested that two and two might not equal four: what does every Asian and African know with a mathematical certainty but that he will find his independence and human dignity withheld from him by the bayonets and napalm of the United States?

At that moment, more vividly than at any other time, I realized what it means to be an American in this age of revolution. And it was a very dirty feeling.

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Southern Juries

THE WHITE HAND OF JUSTICE . . Paul Good

The verdict is in.

Deep South juries still will not convict a white man for murdering a Negro or another white man who pleads the Negro's cause. The acquittal of Deputy Sheriff Thomas Coleman in Hayneville, Ala., in the slaying of theology student Jonathan Daniels has only confirmed what already had been demonstrated in trial after trial.

But the current exclamations of outrage, the scurrying about for remedy on the part of reasonable Americans, might lead an outsider to think that some new phenomenon of injustice had suddenly appeared. It is, of course, as much a part of our judicial scene as juries themselves, and this furnishes the key to cause and possible remedy.

By unofficial and modest count, there have been twenty-one civil rights murders in the deep South since 1961. Not one white man has been convicted of murder in any of these crimes, although white guilt has often been palpable. To stretch the count back into earlier decades would only increase numerical proof of a moral certainty.

A demand for new federal legislation has resounded from many quarters. Dr. Martin Luther King said: "It is obviously clear that federal anti-lynch legislation must be passed."

Alabama Attorney General Richmond Flowers, who tried to take the Coleman prosecution out of local racist hands, only to be thwarted by Circuit Judge T. Werth Thagard, declared: "Those who feel they have a license to kill, destroy and cripple now have been assured that license. It is our duty to do what is necessary to retrieve it."

And the *New York Post* said of the white people of Lowndes County: "But even they, in their innermost hearts, must have quailed at the chief defense attorney's post-trial comment: 'Tom Coleman has been tried in a temple of justice. . . .'"

Decent men feel passionate about Hayneville because the miscarriage of justice was as gross as the death of Daniels and the wounding of Father Richard Morrisroe were poignant. Reverting to a well-thumbed and bloody script, the defense—backed by state police—said that young Daniels had flashed a switch-blade knife as he and his black and white friends sought to enter a general store where Coleman stood guard with a 12-gauge automatic shotgun. A few months before his murder, while he still was ministering in Selma, Daniels had written:

> *There are good men here, just as there are bad men. . . . Sometimes we confront the posse, and sometimes we hold a child. Sometimes we stand with men who have learned to hate, and sometimes we must stand a little apart from them. Our lives in Selma are filled with ambiguity, and in that we share with men everywhere. We are beginning to see the world as we never saw it before. We are truly in the world, and yet ultimately not of it. For through the bramble bush of doubt and fear and supposed success we are groping our way to the realization that above all else, we are called to be saints. That is the mission of the church everywhere. And in this, Selma, Ala., is like all the world: it needs the life and witness of militant saints.*

It takes a certain kind of American juror to believe, in the face of this testament and the plausible evidence, that Daniels advanced on an armed deputy, switch-blade knife in hand. But one familiar with trials of recent years knows there is nothing that Southern white jurors will not believe or purport to believe in defense of their pigmented supremacy.

For example, I think of the second trial of Byron de la Beckwith for the ambush slaying of Jackson NAACP leader Medgar Evers. During the first trial, which ended in a hung jury, scales of justice hanging on the wall above the judge's bench had been tilted. The press commented and the scales were straightened for the second trial, hanging neat and balanced as the prosecutor told the jury: "I am a segregationist. I believe it. I don't believe any possibility of good coming from forced mixing of the races."

He was trying to ingratiate himself with the twelve white men. He knew that however persuasive his evidence he must win a trial within a trial by convincing the jurors not to deny justice in the name of segregation. I remember de la Beckwith smirking as the prosecution placed in evidence a letter he had written to a magazine after the murder, offering an article about "shooting at night at varmints in the summertime."

Three policemen (white, naturally) from de la Beckwith's home town testified that they had seen him there when the murder was being committed in Jackson with his gun, and another jury was hung. De la Beckwith went back to Greenwood and immediately resumed his Negro-baiting. The Mississippi prosecution, unlike that in Hayneville, had at least tried.

In Georgia, when Lemuel Penn, a Washington, D.C., Negro educator unconnected with the civil rights movement, was slain as he drove home from army duty, the prosecution tried still harder. Negroes even appeared on the jury list in Madison County.

"We read in the papers," said Sheriff Dewey Seagraves, "where the Supreme Court said you had to have both colored and white in the jury box. Up to this term of court, there's never been a nigger in that box."

Two Negroes were called but neither was chosen. Ku Klux Klansmen J. Howard Sims and Cecil Myers had been identified as the murderers in a confession made to the FBI by fellow Klansman James Lackey. The prosecution did not pander to white supremacy as had been done in Jackson, did not use the word "nigger." The judge, Carey Skelton, was an urbane man, a friend of the late President Kennedy, and a respected jurist.

Yet Georgia's efforts availed nothing. A florid-faced 60-year-old defense lawyer addressed his neighbors in the jury box, flailing his arms and shouting: "Gentlemen, I am not afraid to stand up against the untold resources of the federal government because I am standing in the presence of the symbol of the

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greatest tradition mankind has ever known . . . the jury system . . . twelve good men and true, a jury of peers through whose veins flow the rich Anglo-Saxon blood and the milk of human kindness."

He went on from this dripping metaphor to an apoplectic denunciation of Washington for having sent the FBI to Georgia with instructions to "bring back white meat." I watched Klansmen fill the courtroom and Negroes disappear as the jury returned and the defendants stood with arms folded in a secret Klan attitude. The verdict was acquittal. The next night at a Klan rally in Atlanta, Klan Wizard James Venable told an assembly of the robed faithful:

> *You'll never be able to convict a white man that kills a nigger what encroaches on the white race of the South. They tried it in Philadelphia* [where the three Mississippi civil rights workers were slain] *and over in Danielsville. You see a jury there last night turn 'em scot free. Now, Mr. Hoover and Mr. Johnson, what do you say about that?*

What do we say about that? What do we do about "twelve good men and true" who turn out to be a dozen bigots condoning murder? Demands for federal anti-lynch laws are the impassioned call from a national sense of frustrated justice. This sense was pricked by the inexplicably casual reaction of U.S. Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach:

> *I think this kind of result is expected from time to time. This is the price you have to pay for the jury system, but I don't think it is too high a price to pay.*

In light of decades of such unvarying verdicts, Mr. Katzenbach perhaps knows what he meant by "from time to time." But federal anti-lynch or personal security laws raise questions both constitutionally grave and practically complex. Assuming, for example, that a satisfactory definition of civil rights murder could be drawn and made to hold legal water, and assuming the Supreme Court ruled it constitutional, how would it work?

Would indictments be obtained from federal grand juries chosen from the deep South areas where the crimes were committed? If so, past experience gives no assurance that white federal grand jurors would invariably function with more regard for justice than state jurors. And federal trial jurors would either be picked from local venires or else the cases would have to be tried without a jury before federal judges, thus depriving defendants of their right to jury trial.

It has also been suggested that such cases might be removed North, possibly to Washington, where some kind of super-federal juries would sit. But this immediately smacks of police state-ism, perhaps even of Kafka — select government jurors somehow pruned of passions, creatures of central authority invested with the awful power to condemn whomever the government brings before them.

Faced with these alternatives, Sen. Clifford Case (R., N.J.) winced at Katzenbach's detached reaction and said:

> *The federal government is not impotent. It has the power and we can find ways to provide adequate protection of the constitutional rights of all our citizens anywhere in the United States.*

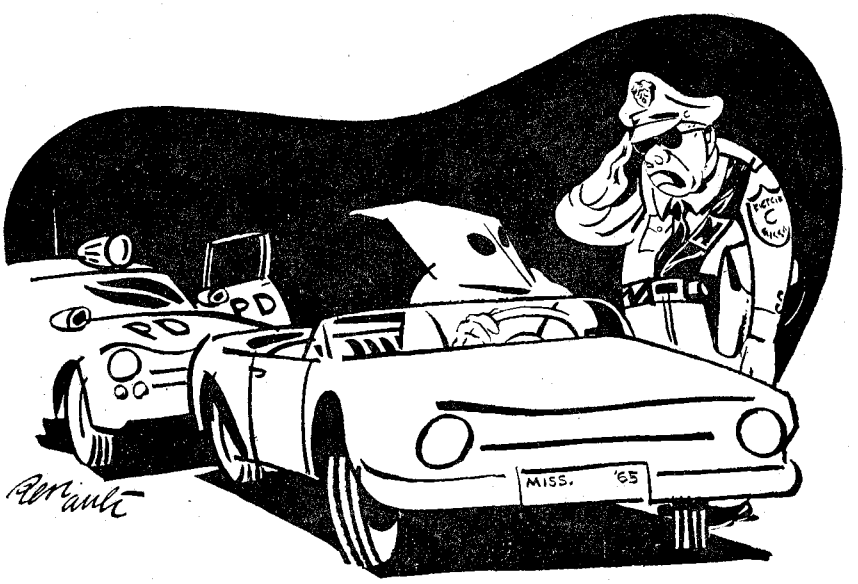
Senator Case has several bills pending in the Senate Judiciary Committee—some co-sponsored by New York Sen. Jacob Javits—to promote adequate protection. None approaches the severity of an anti-lynch law. They are mainly designed to put more bite in existing laws. One, for example, increases penalties against those who harm a person while attempting to deprive him of his civil rights. Another would make municipalities liable for damages arising from civil suits when a policeman or sheriff is guilty of such deprivation. Civil action by the families of Daniels or Father Morrisroe against Lowndes County might come under the purview of this legislation.

But none of these remedies seems to go to the heart of the malady—the "twelve good men and true." Charles Morgan, a former Birmingham attorney hounded out of the city in 1963 for his civil rights efforts, and now director of the American Civil Liberties Union Southern regional office, says of Mr. Katzenbach's statement on the price of a jury system: "I'm willing to pay any price too. And speaking of the jury system, I think we ought to try our jury system some time."

Mr. Morgan's contention, presently backed by more than half a dozen ACLU suits that are approaching court hearings, is that enough legislation presently exists to prevent judicial travesties like Hayneville; the government has only to use it.

"The cry for fresh federal legislation lets the federal government off the hook," he says. "I'm not saying I'm against an enforceable personal security law. Maybe with one we could protect civil rights workers better. But we will be ignoring every other aspect of the American system of justice by doing that alone. We have the obligation to work things out so that the average Negro or poor person is not afraid of the law whether it is in Lowndes County or in Cook County, Illinois."

Mr. Morgan cites Lowndes as an example of how the quality of justice in the deep South might be dramatically improved if the hallowed



Ben Roth Agency

"Forgive Me for Not Recognizing Y'all, Sheriff"

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concept of the jury system were made a reality. The county is about 80 per cent Negro, yet only in the last year were the names of two Negroes placed on the jury rolls for the first time since Reconstruction. Eighteen more went on after the ACLU unsuccessfully tried to obtain a temporary injunction barring all criminal trials in the county on the ground that Negroes were systematically excluded from juries.

Sixty names were called in the venire from which the Coleman jurors were chosen. No Negro name was among them, but coincidentally enough, Coleman's was. From all accounts, no Justice Department officials were present in court to witness this aberration of the jury system. That is nothing new—the department has a history, North and South, of indifference to flagrant injustice in the form of state and federal jury selections.

Mr. Morgan argues that if Negroes had been represented in anything like mathematical proportion, the jury would have been predominantly or totally black. This is anathema to most white Alabamians, who insist that justice is a white hand protruding from a black robe. But the federal government should not adopt the Alabama point of view. A predominantly black jury is no insurance of justice, of course, but in civil rights cases, it could be a guarantee that judge, defense—and even prosecution — would not use race as the determining, if officially unsubmitted, prime exhibit. Morgan reasons further:

Or consider the de la Beckwith trial. If Jackson's 40 per cent Negro population was anything like represented on the venire, you would have had a black and white jury. Or else defense lawyers would have wasted all their peremptory challenges on the Negroes. Whether Beckwith were guilty or not, some whites on that jury did vote to convict, looking past prejudice. You would have had more white men of that caliber sitting if the selection system were fair and equal.

We are constricted under a system of segregated justice from the jury list to the clerk of the court, the bailiffs, the prosecutors, the state and local police, the defense lawyers and the judges. Intra-racial Negro crime is judged paternalistically with light sentences encouraging racial self-degredation. In civil damage suits, a Negro leg, broken or amputated, is worth one-fifth the settlement for a white leg. But we have the weapons to break this ring of segregated justice at the vital point of the jury.

He points out that the Justice Department could immediately begin prosecutions under Title XVIII, Section 243 of the U. S. code. This bars the systematic exclusion of any qualified citizen from jury service and authorizes a $5,000 fine against the jury commissioner or judge guilty of fostering such exclusion. It has been enforced only once since it went on the books in the Reconstruction days of the 1870s. It is true that in the past individual appeals from Negro criminal defendants have successfully been argued before the Supreme Court on the grounds of exclusion. But none of these has been in the form of a class action which would open the door to sweeping injunctive recourse against officials in places like Lowndes County.

On November 26, the ACLU will go before a three-judge federal court in Montgomery in a jury exclusion case which could prove historic. Its suit is entitled *Gardenia White* v. *Bruce Crook*. Crook is the Lowndes County jury commissioner; Miss White is a Negro resident of the county. It is a class action and she is joined by others, including the mother of the slain seminarian Daniels. The ACLU will cite Section 1983, Title 42 (and others) of the U.S. code which deals with deprival of civil rights, in this case as applying to jury service. If successful in Montgomery or on appeal to the Supreme Court, it could be the wedge opening Southern jury boxes to Negroes.

On Dec. 16, in New Orleans, the full Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals will hear six more exclusion cases. Four apply to state jury lists, two to federal rolls. The ACLU will present an array of citations asserting that there is already available ample legal recourse to end racially stacked juries.

On the federal level, a rule of criminal procedure enables the Justice Department to challenge federal grand jurors. And when it comes to the states, ACLU's Morgan will argue in *Billingsley* v. *Clayton* that the United States generally and Jefferson County (Birmingham) in particular empanels *Literary Digest* juries. The reference is to the disastrous *Literary Digest* poll of 1936 that predicted Alfred Landon would win the Presidential election. The persons polled came mainly from telephone lists and auto-registration records, and that neatly—and embarrassingly for the magazine—excluded the mass of the poor.

"This will be the first case of its kind to reach any appellate court in the country," Mr. Morgan says. "If the poor—and the Negro minority is predominant among the poor—are entitled to representation in a poverty program, surely they're entitled to representation on juries. We've passed a voting bill this year. But the Western world gave men the right to serve on juries long before they had the right to vote."

The American jury system is a shambles, North and South. There are, for example, ninety-two federal district courts and ninety-two different jury-selection systems. It would seem urgent business for the Congress, as it reapportions in order to assure legislative equality and the one-man, one-vote concept, to move to insure that every qualified American is guaranteed a democratic jury vote—both when he casts it and when he awaits its outcome.

Such a law or court decisions stemming from the ACLU suits could possibly result in a flood of appeals from men now in prison for retroactive justice. This undoubtedly plays a part in Justice Department inertia concerning the issue. But retroactive justice, however legally complicating, must be preferable to condoning injustice by perpetuating it. If an honest jury system were established, Byron de la Beckwith could be retried. The Alabama state trooper who allegedly murdered Negro Jimmy Lee Jackson last spring in Marion, and whom a Perry County grand jury refused to indict during the same week Coleman was acquitted, could be indicted and tried. The Klansmen accused of killing the three Philadelphia civil rights workers would have their day in an interracial court.

The ghostly ranks of those who have died in the South for human rights can never be wholly avenged, nor should vengeance be the driving purpose. But a dynamic and democratic justice that can punish can also by example give pause to those who would strike the defenseless. The South has seen enough martyrdoms. The conscience of this Republic can bear no more.

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Mythic Voyage

STARTING OUT IN THE THIRTIES. By Alfred Kazin. Little, Brown & Co. 166 pp. $4.95.

Allen Guttmann

The frontispiece to Alfred Kazin's *A Walker in the City* (1951) was Alfred Stieglitz's famous photograph, "The Steerage." The title page had for its epigraph lines from Whitman's "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry": "The glories strung like beads on my smallest sights and hearings—on the walk in the street, and the passage over the river." The book itself, an autobiography to which *Starting Out in the Thirties* is the sequel, was about the anonymous immigrants whom Stieglitz fixed forever at the moment of their arrival in the promised land, and about Kazin's own passage from the *heymish* streets of Brownsville to "the great world" beyond the ghetto, the world that he, like Whitman, was to claim as native ground. Here, "ratty little wooden tenements, born with the smell of damp in them, in which there grew up how many schoolteachers, city accountants, rabbis, cancer specialists, functionaries of the revolution . . .."; there, the America of Homer, Eakins, Ryder and Sloan, of Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson. The imaginative crest of the book is the moment when Lewis Mumford's *The Brown Decades*, and his own walks through what was left of 19th-century New York, came together to spring open "the great trunk of forgotten time." To keep that trunk open, Kazin read "as if books would fill my every gap, legitimize my strange quest for American past, remedy my every flaw. . . ." His account of himself as walker and reader was as memorable as Ben Franklin's description of that first stroll, a loaf of bread under each arm, through the streets of Philadelphia. Autobiography, in Kazin's first volume, was mythic voyage.

Starting Out in the Thirties is very different. It is still Kazin's story—the outline of his literary career from his first impetuous interview with a Famous Man (John Chamberlain) to the moment when he stands on the threshold of what the reader knows to be success. But now the story includes other people, living lives of their own, as well as Whitman's "glories strung like beads." Social history (seen, to paraphrase Zola, through a temperament) replaces *Bildungsroman*; we identify the people rather than the mood.

In large part, the book is a series of portraits brilliantly painted. V. F. Calverton, the independently Marxist editor of *Modern Monthly*, becomes an 18th-century theologian, ready with the argument-from-design: "He was indefatigably and thoroughly an intellectual Socialist. Evidences lay all around him, waiting to form a system." Calverton's home was an arena where all the elements of the anti-Communist Left clashed by night. Max Eastman, very much the Americanizer of radical doctrine, who "would have liked to sit down with Marx and talk him out of his unfortunate German tendency to metaphysics," takes on Sidney Hook, whose passionately logical defense of Marx and Dewey, two and indivisible, overwhelmed all comers. An anonymous Pole appears as a "veteran of the revolutionary wars," kindly, disillusioned, "expert on all Socialists and socialisms, utopian, scientific, social democrat, libertarian and dogmatic, a man with a heavy bald front and a face shaped like a stone by every obstacle in his path." Scenes shift but not the milieu: "With his long, lean, bony body in blue trunks, [Bertram Wolfe] sat cross-legged on the beach at Provincetown, a volume of the Marx-Engels correspondence in German before him, looking intellectual, saintly and nervous, like a harried American version of Mahatma Gandhi." Some of the harshest sketches are of Mary McCarthy, whom Kazin discredits with "a wholly destructive critical mind," and of Philip Rahv, whom Kazin accuses of excessive interest in *Partisan Review* and its "inner group." (Kazin quickly admits that the *Partisan Review* group was loyal to a great cultural tradition that was his tradition as well.) Judgment has always been Kazin's mode. His assessments will be countered by others. Mary McCarthy, for one, can certainly take care of herself in literary rough-and-tumble.

The common denominator of all the important characters is a concern with both politics and literature. Adolescent Kazin appears on the first page with a brief case full of college essays on the metaphysical poets, but the authors that count in this second volume are Silone and Malraux, rather than Donne or Marvell (or Whitman and Dickinson), novelists of society rather than poets of the self. Malraux, especially, matters. *La Condition Humaine* is one of the books Kazin reads in order to find the answer to the most crucial of questions: What must we do? What must *I* do? Kazin hears Malraux, at a rally held to raise money for the Spanish Loyalists, and feels the phrases, later a part of the great novel, *L'Espoir*, stab and drive "the agony of Spain like nails into our flesh." (The novel is now out of print and, I am told by publishers, no longer of interest.) When Ralph Bates, another novelist who fought in Spain, talks to a group at Muriel Draper's, Kazin detects a falseness in him, a concern not with his subject but with his own skill as a user of language. The *mauvaise foi* reappears, on a vastly larger scale, when the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939 brings the two totalitarian dictatorships together in a bloody bargain that Kazin (and other Socialists) abhorred, which the Stalinists quickly "explained." Like many other Socialists, Kazin had clung throughout the thirties to some shreds of faith in the Soviet Union, even after the Moscow trials (which he knew to be faked), but disbelief could no longer be suspended. "All my life I had lived among people who had seemed to me beautiful because they were the dust of the earth; I had taken literally the claim that they identified their suffering with the liberation of humanity." Now he saw them as ideologues more interested in power than in freedom. "They were as cold as their leader, as self-concerned, heartless, mediocre. . . ." This judgment, itself cold to the point of heartlessness, is too broad and too harsh, too much the familiar, frozen gesture

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of cold-war anti-communism. It is, like the denigration of Wilfred Mendelson in *A Walker in the City,* a false note.

The loss of political faith, the collapse of European society and the outbreak of war, undercut the attainment of literary success. The book ends somberly, with an epilogue devoted to an event five years later than the latest section of the narrative. In 1945, in a London theatre, Kazin saw a newsreel of the release of the prisoners from Belsen. "It was unbearable. People coughed in embarrassment, and in embarrassment many laughed." These lines, which end the book, are hard to understand, but perhaps the key is in *A Walker in the City,* when Kazin described the moment, also in London, when he heard a broadcast of the first Sabbath service at this same concentration camp. Then, he was taken back in time to sundown and Sabbath in Brownsville, to the primitive togetherness of the community he left behind in his "strange quest for the American past." The opposition of the frontispiece and the epigraph remains unresolved, and the career is (one hopes) far from ended.

To speak of unresolved tensions is not to disparage. The drama of assimilation is seldom as simple as it was in Mary Antin's unambivalently grateful autobiography, *The Promised Land.* Kazin has shown himself to be a master of realistic as well as romantic prose, but his special value is, precisely, in his personification of the dilemma of one who feels the contrary pull of past and present. He is, in short, one of Emerson's representative men, one who symbolizes a certain kind of excellence. It is, unfortunately, the excellence of these two autobiographical volumes that makes them dangerous in the hands of unwary readers. We long to have an age, or even a decade, summed up between the covers of a single forceful book. Benjamin Franklin's autobiography is, for example, undoubtedly a clue to one tendency in American life — the utilitarian and pragmatic, the rationalistic and the scientific — but Franklin is a poor guide (for instance) to the pietism that characterizes the religious life of the common man from his time to our own. Kazin's accomplishments make him credible, and overly credulous students will surely see the thirties through his eyes, and wrongly assume that everyone in the "Red Decade" really was a Socialist or a Communist, that the Spanish Civil War was an important part of the consciousness of the man in the street, that the literary life of the *Modern Monthly* and the *Partisan Review* was the whole of the literary life of the nation. Kazin is surely not to be blamed for the ways in which his book will be misused. Still, it is ironic that he chose, in a recent review, to lampoon studies of American culture, to reap — McCormick-like — a whole field of straw men, and to ignore one of the basic difficulties of cultural history, the proclivity of even the best scholars to see in the complex work of art a key to unlock all the doors on Main Street. We have all, for instance, heard quite enough about the Jew as the archetype of all Americans. Kazin has written so well that we shall have to try hard not to misuse him.

Washington's Top Banana

THE JOHNSON HUMOR. Edited by Bill Adler. Simon & Schuster. 124 pp. $2.95.

Larry L. King

It is not the fault of editor Bill Adler, nor of the Messrs. Simon and Schuster, that *The Johnson Humor* does not capture the President's true wit.

Despite his free-wheeling, supercharged, flambouyant image, Lyndon B. Johnson usually takes care to turn a "safe" public face to watchful voters. No man can divest himself of cornier, more time-tested, acceptable political flapdoodle. Thus we see the Lyndon B. Johnson who lavishly praises motherhood, waves the flag, invites every high school band on the campaign circuit to parade at his inauguration, bellows from his limousine to curious curbstone gawkers, "Yawl come ta tha speakin'," kisses babies, presses flesh, delivers folksy sermons that are the envy of all the one-gallus parsons of the world.

Without detracting from the President's near water-walking feats in bewitching Congress (and the public) into accepting almost everything he asks in domestic legislation, one notes that he is a master of timing. So are all good comics. As Bob Hope builds, one-liner by double-take, toward the climax of his stand-up routines, so LBJ builds (speech by bill by handy circumstance) the foundation stone of his career. He cashed in on the martyrdom of John F. Kennedy to crash the Civil Rights Act through a foot-dragging Congress, exploited the stupidity of Governor George Wallace, Sheriff Jim Clark and their red-necked Alabama disciples to attain enactment of the Voting Rights Act, hoisted Barry Goldwater by the Senator's many own petards. Thus his performances are calculating rather than bold, his triumphs planned rather than accidental. The Johnson public humor is likewise calculating, planned, safe. It is, therefore, often dull and commonplace. It fails to inspire, when reduced to print and bound in hard cover.

The private, behind-the-scenes Lyndon B. Johnson can be a very funny man. He is an excellent mimic in broadly aping the talk, mannerisms, con games and dreams of his many political associates. At such times he is a rubber-faced, perceptive, charming, bright-eyed elfin. Lamentably, few see Washington's top banana in these fascinating performances. No author, or editor or book can wholly capture them.

Sometimes the Johnson humor is crude. To speech writers on his old Senatorial staff he once said: "This might be a good speech for ole Adlai Stevenson or for Cabot Lodge up there at the UN. But I'm not *at* the UN. I represent the boondocks. Don't be scared to take off your writin' shoes and wade in barnyard juices." Johnson once joshed a Senate colleague, who had been giving him a hard time on key bills: "You keep on screwin' me the way you have, you're gonna have to buy my groceries—or at least gimme a little *kiss!*"

Often his humor has bite. I attended a meeting, when Johnson was Senate Majority Leader, where numerous Texans appeared before a convention of bureaucrats to urge the opening of a new international bridge on the United States-Mexico border at El Paso. Employing the negative doctrine so often favored by professional bureaucrats, representatives of agency

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after agency sang recitals of special problems the project would pose. Finally, Johnson said: "If St. Peter at the Pearly Gates takes the attitude *you* people take, the Pope and Billy Graham will have to *shoot* their way into Heaven."

Much of Johnson's humor is at the expense of others. Pierre Salinger and Hubert Humphrey nervously perched on horseback at The Ranch, dressed as if for the annual Drugstore Cowboys Ball, break the President up. Some of his wit is inspired by a monumental ego, and is unintentional—as when he said with a straight face to John F. Kennedy on election night in 1960, "*You're* losin' Ohio, but *we're* ahead in Pennsylvania."

Some of Johnson's funnier performances are given when his mind is far from comedy. A couple of years ago, talking politics at his Washington home with a Texas Congressman one Saturday morning, Johnson abruptly grabbed the phone, announcing that: "George Reedy never takes enough shirts along on our trips." Reaching the Reedy home, he spoke as follows:

"Mrs. Reedy, what size shirt does George wear? (Pause). Naw. (Frown). He wears a bigger shirt than *that*. George is a bigger man than that." Johnson hung up. He dialed a department store, identified himself, asked for the manager. Waiting, he said (more to the walls than to his open-mouthed guest), "*She* don't know what size shirt George wears." Ordering a dozen shirts a *full size* larger than Mrs. Reedy had recommended, the then Vice President wanted them delivered to his aide's home: "You get 'em over there this afternoon? Fine, fine! You're a can-do man." Then, hanging up the phone, he turned to his slack-jawed companion. "Go ahead," he said. "I'm listenin'."

Regrettably, *The Johnson Humor* tells no such tales. It is confined to Johnson's utterances in speeches, at press conferences, or repeats well-worn Presidential bromides that have appeared in older print. One is left wondering, as with Jack Paar, what he is *really* like.

Correspondent to the Underworld

NOTES FROM A SEA DIARY: Hemingway All the Way. By Nelson Algren. G. P. Putnam's Sons. 254 pp. $4.50.

Sol Yurick

Like one of his legendary gold-heart whores, Nelson Algren has been caged by the craving to tell us the way it *really* is. He sticks his hand out through the bars and begs for the handout of recognition. "I was encouraged to give a boggling world yet another Hemingway essay . . . smelling of salt." Who's the pusher? Who hooked him? Maybe it was the irresistible reflection of the world-shattering possibilities of Truthful Nelson: or possibly, because it is a time when entertainment is badly needed, *we* seduced him into this clownish position. Now, continuing to exploit the fiction of the *real* self, so tastelessly worked out in his last two books, he recounts the sad tale of how a nice boy like him got into The Profession.

But, we must never forget that before he got hooked, Nelson Algren wrote one great book: *The Man With The Golden Arm.* Are there ten living American writers who have written a great book? Five?

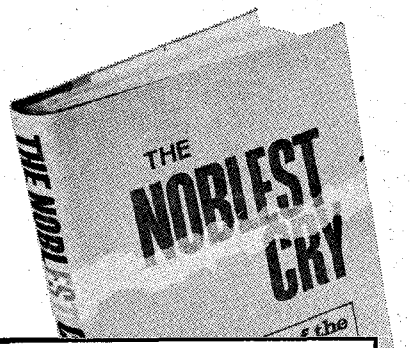
Algren's latest campaign to uncage himself runs this way: he takes a sea voyage to Eastern ports; he undertakes to vindicate Hemingway from his detractors; he excoriates American corruption, especially in the Republic of Letters; he witnesses suffering the world over; he alludes to past rapes made on his soul; he strives to interrelate the forces of evil, all converging on Nelson Algren: for, whatever he is talking about, he is Presenting Nelson Algren. The symbolic compound doesn't bond: the retort holds a petulant amalgam. There is a certain innocence about the performance, as if someone is going to *do* something about it. Perhaps he believes in the social-work philosophy of our time.

In making the sea voyage, Algren allies himself with all the kind-hearted, hard-boiled men of the world, paying homage to the idea that experience ennobles and is the core of literature; the myth of verisimilitude. The trip should serve as a sea-change-of-luck, magically putting uncrossable water over which the demoniac critics cannot pass in pursuit: it is also an isolation and revivification motif. But, since all the world's an Algren-hell, he didn't escape the critics: worse, he found himself.

By beating Hemingway's sharkish host-munchers off, Algren becomes the kingly co-victim. He relates a mystic investment between seer and acolyte which would have us believe a liturgical dialogue took place, but it sounds as if they were both stupified by reputation into incanting Hemingwayish nonsense-stichomythia. What Algren is trying to say is that The Writer, because he alone has really suffered, is able to translate that suffering and is above criticism. And: sincere writers truly understand one another. Presumably, critics don't suffer but wax saprophytically. Which is why they have never given Algren-Hemingway his due. But why worry about Hemingway: if his work is great, critical dissection can only canonize him. If not. . . .

It is Algren's misfortune that he wrote his great book at the wrong time. He arrived after the end of that great romantic period of the thirties: who wanted lyrical natural-

Sol Yurick is the author of the recently published novel, The Warriors *(Holt, Rinehart & Winston).*



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by CHARLES LAM MARKMANN

ST. MARTIN'S

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ism, no matter how superb, in 1950? Algren failed to properly initiate the next fad-step, expressed as absurdity and homage to junkie-heroes. Algren merely created a total world: it included absurdity but didn't overspecialize, it had suffering, perpetual darkness, and underground men peopled it without special pleading; but that world seemed to be vitiated by a dated syntax. So Hemingway appeared to be an initiator; Algren a culminator. Yet Hemingway looks wistfully back to Byron and more writers will be, in the long run, influenced by Algren.

As for Algren's diatribe on corruption in American letters: it is silly. Algren behaves as if he is uncovering a scandal no one knew existed. It has always existed; it is a fact of life. After all, Algren has written knowingly about the corrupt world. Is it possible that this determined innocent made the error of thinking that the civic pustulation did not infect him, that he alone was immune? And this is the point: talent and achievement exempt no man; horror, like light speed, is a constant to all men in all situations.

When Algren gripes about the world — the alienation of modern man, machine society, literary clowns, predatory movie producers, academic fustiness—it is naively done; it is the innocent asking us to get excited about what is dissected for us every day by experts. He has forgotten that fiction transfigures sociology, and has therefore taken on the job of a roving correspondent to the underworld. Traditionally, with all the other oppressed, he has a secret. But he isn't putting out with that secret, that fiction, because if a whore gives her love freely, she will be hurt, betrayed, exhausted, dead. But if no love-truth is given, no fiction written, Algren is dead anyway. Who is cheated here? The literary con and fad men are happier if he doesn't threaten them with the possibility of a genuine contribution: those who have believed in his importance are done out of another possible great fiction.

This is the age of the great stranger-than-fiction confession: the world demands entertainment and all the Thersiteses fight for the bright abasement of the hot center. But the peevish literary clowns who mistake themselves for meta-literature have a more natural flare for exhibitionism than Algren ever had. Yet it is the peculiar value of fiction that it transubstantiates polemic into truth. Hemingway knew that much till he succumbed to the childish paraphernalia of bats and bulls and athleticism.

A few years ago Algren asked the question, *Who Lost An American?* As long as he continues to write books like this we have all lost an American.

The Last Words of E.H.

Kermit Vanderbilt

Ernest Hemingway Reading (Caedmon TC 1185) is a recent addition to the growing library of writers reading from their works. Some of the excitement of the creative act may be suggested in such recordings, carried by the cadence and resonance of the author's own voice. Often the work gains meaning through the author's intonation. Though successful readings are scarce, those by Allen Tate, Wallace Stevens, E. E. Cummings, T. S. Eliot, Katherine Anne Porter, and above all Dylan Thomas, immediately come to mind. To this distinguished group, one can now add *Ernest Hemingway Reading.* Indeed, because it offers a number of improvisations along with the readings, Caedmon's recording may very well be placed in a category all its own.

Surprisingly, for a man who loved to act many roles, Hemingway was microphone-shy. The present record was culled mainly from tapes made in Cuba between 1948 and 1961. They have been released by A. E. Hotchner, adapter of several Hemingway stories for television in the fifties. Not only do they provide revelations of Hemingway the man, but they also suggest a few insights into his work.

The least eventful of the six offerings are "The Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech" and "Work in Progress." The main interest here is Hemingway's voice, a clear, vibrant low-tenor, unexpectedly youthful, almost boyish. It reminds one of a recurring theme in the fiction, that of age reaching back toward youth. So too, incidentally, does the album cover, which pictures the older Hemingway standing beside his youthful portrait.

More interesting is "The Fifth Column," Hemingway's explanation of his Spanish Civil War play. The remarks are pointed and, to the degree that they are self-disparaging, offer glimpses into an appealing side of the Hemingway personality. He might have presented this commentary, along with introductions to some of his stories, on a projected television series. But Hemingway turned down the lucrative offer. The sample introduction to "The Fifth Column" makes one feel that television and posterity lost far more than Hemingway in the rejected offer.

The three other pieces are the most valuable. They may disturb a few standard assumptions about Hemingway's work and his view of himself. Again, the comic self-denigration can be heard as nowhere in the printed interviews or the autobiographical fragments. "Saturday Night at the Whorehouse in Billings, Montana" is an ad-libbed reminiscence with touches of Rabelaisian fantasy. Hemingway recounts, among other adventures, his ordeal as a young writer working as bouncer in Western bawdy houses after the Great War. During these early years, he broke his hands every single week in Saturday night brawls with the local customers. Such was his *gagne-pain.* For a severely maimed writer, work was difficult and life itself precarious.

"Second Poem to Mary" is a war poem he wrote privately for Mary Welsh in 1944. Here is the familiar Hemingway blending of wartime disillusionment and sacrilege, together with a plea for universal love and compassion. In addition, the voice and comment register the recurring note of self-effacement amid the bluster and rhetoric.

The selection which best displays Hemingway's changing moods and masks is "In Harry's Bar in Venice." It is Hemingway's own parody of *Across the River and into the Trees* shortly after the novel appeared in 1950. The book had been receiving hostile reviews. Critics especially disliked Hemingway's main character, 50-year-old Colonel Richard Cantwell, presumably Hemingway in thin disguise. In the novel, one will recall that Cantwell is spending the final weekend of his life in Venice, eating and

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drinking at Harry's Bar, intermittently nursing his cardiac condition, and talking incessantly about life, war and himself. His audience is chiefly Renata, a teen-aged Italian *contessa*, who holds the Colonel's mutilated right hand, listens devoutly, and engages briefly in whatever physical love her elderly partner can still undertake. She then says goodby, her aging lover goes duck hunting in the lagoon, and presently dies in an auto on his way back to Trieste. Reviews of the novel considered the action and the hero adolescent and unbelievable, or at best merely pathetic and boring, an unwitting parody of Hemingway's fictional world and his own vainglorious career.

Caedmon Records now permits a slightly different view of the matter. Mr. Hotchner, on a visit to Cuba in 1950, was reading E. B. White's parody of the novel, "Across the Street and into the Grill" printed in *The New Yorker*. Hemingway's response to the parody was first defensive anger, quickly supplanted by the impulse to "wing it" with his own self-parody. Holding a drink in one hand and a tape-recorder microphone in the other, he delivered the improvisation included in the Caedmon record.

The latest novel came to him "in a sort of haze in Harry's Bar," Hemingway explains to his imaginary audience. The hero, "if he can be called a hero," is a trigger-happy, 18-year-old colonel, commissioned "no one knows quite how." His superiors have requested that he go on indefinite leave. He arrives in Venice and immediately begins to shoot fanatically at objects floating down the Grand Canal. Next he embarks on forty-eight days of continuous drinking, on credit, at Harry's Bar. (For those who have complained that he interlards his prose with foreign phrases, Hemingway inserts, and explains, a localism or two.) During this extended interlude at Harry's, the colonel loses sight of his true love, an 86-year-old Venetian countess. She has left him to his marathon drunk and taken refuge in the upper reaches of the neighboring basilica. The false hero elopes with a local maiden. On an offshore island they are able to enjoy a brief period of dalliance, aided by their chaperone, a priest, who has conveniently passed out. "But there is tragedy in all this": the girl has a defective heart. The sensitive colonel is not able to witness human suffering and so he leaves. He is last viewed swimming into the sunset, on his way to a fishing port down the coast. Hemingway closes with a plea to his readers to respond generously to the book's publication, for he hopes to channel part of the royalties to the support of a real-life foundation, already established to the memory of his fictional heroine.

This self-parody invites some of us who have hyphenated Cantwell and Hemingway to return for another look at *Across the River and into the Trees*. Cantwell in the novel is by turns cynical and soft-boiled, and so was Hemingway. Their ages are identical and their experiences in both wars similar. But Hemingway may have intended Cantwell also to be a comic figure and perhaps even a wry commentary on the author. If so, the focus is unsteady, shifting between sympathy and satire, but let us assume that the comic dimension was clearly part of the design. The colonel is in fact a demoted general, and the more Hemingway allows him to rant, the more justified to the reader this loss of rank begins to appear. He noisily berates those who were not his military equals in the war—Patton, Eisenhower and Montgomery. A braggart and bogus philosopher, Cantwell resembles the classic *miles gloriosus* of Plautine comedy. His surname becomes an obvious pun on what he talks well. It reminds us, too, that his prowess as an aging lover has seriously declined: Cantwell resembles also Plautus' *senex amator*. As for the young Renata of the long, dark hair, she plays his spurious Mary Magdalene. She fancies that his mutilated hand is the hand of Christ, and apparently hopes to be born again ("renata") by listening to his cant, which she mistakes for wisdom, as does he. ("How many times have you been hit in the head?" his doctor asks.) She also thinks of him as Richard the Lionhearted, while he reaches for his glycerin pills and washes them down with 15-to-1 martinis. With Jackson, a T/5 who drives the colonel's Buick, on which final payments are due, Cantwell holds conversations that recall Steinbeck's George and Lennie. Riding back to Trieste at the end, after an unsuccessful duck hunt, Cantwell remembers the famous dying words of Stonewall Jackson and quotes them to the Civil War General's slow-witted namesake behind the wheel. Cantwell then crawls into the back seat of "this god-damned, over-sized luxurious automobile" (his own final words) and expires. For all the novel's uncertainty of tone, Colonel Richard Cantwell becomes essentially a comic hero, "if he is a hero," a grotesque version of the earlier Jake Barnes and Robert Jordan who savored experience and tried to derive meaningful answers from it. Read in this light, Hemingway's portrait of the American military man as an ineffectual and befuddled loser might have given us some welcome comic moments in our fiction of the fifties, the decade when American humor hit an all-time low, first in the White House and then in the nation at large.

If *Ernest Hemingway Reading* has allowed Hemingway to have the last laugh, it also provides his readers, who have apparently taken him far more grimly than he seems to have taken himself, the opportunity to listen for and appreciate the Hemingway wit.

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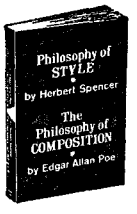

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BELLINI: *Norma.* Joan Sutherland, Marilyn Horne, John Alexander, Richard Cross. London Symphony Orch. and Chorus; Richard Bonynge, cond. RCA Victor LSC 6166.

VERDI: *La Forza del Destino.* Leontyne Price, Richard Tucker, Robert Merrill, Shirley Verrett, Giorgio Tozzi, Ezio Flagello. RCA Italiana Orch. and Chorus; Thomas Schippers, cond. RCA Victor LSC 6413.

Macbeth. Birgit Nilsson, Giuseppe Taddei, Bruno Prevedi. Chorus and Orchestra of l'Accademua di Santa Cecilia, Rome; Thomas Schippers, cond. London OSA 1380.

Rigoletto. Anna Moffo, Robert Merrill, Alfredo Kraus, Rosalind Elias, Ezio Flagello. RCA Italiana Orchestra and Chorus; Georg Solti, cond. RCA Victor LSC 7027.

The Victor *Rigoletto* reveals, primarily, the continuing destruction of Anna Moffo's once brilliant vocal quality. Here again, the overuse and overprojection required of singers on the international opera circuit appear as the inevitable killer of any genuinely individual vocal sound. Instead, what pass for "qualities" in the coarse vastness of the opera houses are such exaggerated mannerisms as Birgit Nilsson's "metallism," Leontyne Price's off-center fuzziness, or Joan Sutherland's muscular chirp. In Sutherland's case, her métier is actually rather appropriate for the special requirements of *Norma,* which otherwise deserves much more attention to detail and phrasing than can be discerned in the present recording. Among the others, *Macbeth* is somewhat primitive if frequently striking Verdi, *La Forza del Destino* is mature middle-period Verdi *con tutte le forze,* and *Rigoletto,* helped by Solti's intelligent control, is ever more unmistakably the classic essay in masterly music-dramatic timing. On the other hand, the performances directed by Mr. Schippers testify mainly to Verdi's astonishing ingenuity in guaranteeing striking dramatic results even under the shabby routine of careless opera-house tradition.

DEBUSSY: *Pelléas et Mélisande.* Erna Spoorenberg, Camille Maurane, George London, Guus Hoekman. L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande; Ernest Ansermet, cond. London OSA 1379.

Pelléas is evidently Ansermet's music (though, I admit, not really mine—it always seems a far too literal and limited instance of a prodigiously subtle composer's capacities); this is a thoroughly "characteristic" performance that probably reveals everything important about the opera's time proportion and its articulation—through its peculiarly neutral vocal and instrumental contours—of the verbal and dramatic progression of the play.

BLITZSTEIN: *The Cradle Will Rock.* Gershon Kingsley, musical director. MGM SE 4289.

Although I find little in this work beyond a rather less inventive and sophisticated depression musical, its re-recording will undoubtedly exert a powerful nostalgic pull on those for whom it will recall the do-it-yourself atmosphere of theatre, art and music of the WPA days, and even more especially on those for whom the hope of a real "serious music for all the people" is a sadly lost—or still envisioned—artistic millenium. For anyone interested in American music as a whole, it is a fascinating insight into a direction that was taken quite seriously in the prewar period by some of our most prestigious composers. Apart from these considerations, though, what remains to be noted are mainly cartoon-stereotyped characters and musical ideas, all considerably stripped down from the sharply contoured Kurt Weill works of which the *Cradle* obviously hoped to be an American extension. But it seems to have been dwarfed in every such respect even by Weill's own later Broadway works. Still, the "message" must have been, then as now, unmistakable!

WAGNER: *Götterdämmerung.* Birgit Nilsson, Wolfgang Windgassen, Gottlob Frick, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Christa Ludwig, Claire Watson, Gustav Neidlinger, Helen Watts, Grace Hoffman, Anita Välkki, Lucia Popp, Gwyneth Jones, Maureen Guy. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra; Georg Solti, cond. London OSA 1604.

Like the recent *Siegfried* recorded by London, the present performance is especially distinguished by the superior orchestral resources, Solti's generally intelligent control and care for total sound and pace as well as detail. And again, the vocal performances are on the highest level currently available in opera houses—higher, in fact, since recordings can utilize first-rate singers even for minor roles. The result is a total performance on a level far superior, for example, to the *Ring* that I heard at Bayreuth two summers ago. The sound, too, seems even cleaner and more effectively projected at extremes of intensity and density than in the earlier *Siegfried.*

All this is particularly impressive in view of the special interpretive conditions confronted in *Götterdämmerung.* Of all the *Ring,* it is the most multilaterally ramified (naturally enough, since there converge in it the dramatic-musical threads of each of the more singly developed earlier parts). In one sense, the variety thus generated presents less of an articulative problem than do the long-spanned unitary textures of some of the others. On the other hand, the total time span of *Götterdämmerung* is commensurately (though not literally) extended to connect the time sense in each section with its generative origins (for Wagner was completely serious in regarding the *Ring* as a single four-evening work!), so that the individual sections present an at least equally difficult task in the realization of their organic unity.

BERLIOZ: *Romeo and Juliet.* Gladys Swarthout, John Carris, Nicola Moscona, soloists; NBC Symphony; Arturo Toscanini, cond. RCA Victor LM 7034.

Romeo and Juliet. Rosalind Elias, Cesare Valletti, Giorgio Tozzi, soloists; New England Conservatory Chorus; Boston Symphony Orchestra; Charles Munch, cond. RCA Victor LD 6098.

Symphonie Fantastique. Berlin Philharmonic; Herbert von Karajan, cond. DGG SLPM 138964.

Berlioz was the 19th-century Varèse, and his absolutely original sonic vision was most fully and multi-dimensionally realized in *Romeo and Juliet.* On this level, it seems to me that Berlioz still awaits his conductor; neither Munch's fondling nor Toscanini's crackling efficiency really explores much of what one can "hear" from even a superficial reading of the score: the violin line at the opening of "Romeo Alone," for example, requires an awareness of the inflective sense of every turn in its fantastically complex course to guide its coherent articulation. But Munch's indiscriminate hesitation on every note and Toscanini's brisk observance of exact noted duration are equally inadequate

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to project either this or its development in the passages—through the end of the Love Scene—that follow.

On the whole, however, the complexity of the score gives the contemporary sound resources on the Munch recording the decided advantage, although the neatness of the playing that Toscanini evokes at great heights of speed and complexity (aside from the "live"-performance accouterments of audience coughs, conductorial vocalism and instrumental *gaffes*) is rather more attractive than Munch's somewhat messy, blurred outlines.

Von Karajan's performance of the *Symphonie Fantastique* is restrained and well played for the most part, much the most impressive of the recent recordings he has made with the Berlin Philharmonic.

BEETHOVEN: Piano Concerto No. 4. Rudolf Serkin, piano. NBC Symphony; Arturo Toscanini, cond. RCA Victor LM 2797 (from the broadcast of November 26, 1944).

The Fourth Concerto is perhaps the most extraordinary manifestation of Beethoven's idea of the piano concerto as an extension of the piano sonata (rather than the symphony) into the piano-orchestral domain. Here, however, the result of the confluence of Serkin, the young Schoenberg pupil, and Toscanini, the Verdian, is like a mixture of oil and water, and does little to help the speciality of the work emerge. The record is nevertheless a fascinating document of a unique concurrence, with a sonic clarity remarkable in a recording of its age.

MOZART: Symphonies Nos. 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41. Angel 36128, 36129, 36183, 36246. All with Philharmonic Orch.; Otto Klemperer, cond.

Whatever individual reservations these performances may evoke, Klemperer obviously knows how the Mozart Symphonies go, and on a level quite close to the fundamental formal centers from which every significant relationship follows. And again, this penetration of generative principles results in a rhythmic precision and incisiveness (most notably in No. 35) that totally belies any initial impression of metrical "slowness." In particular, the slower tempo range gives the last movement of No. 40 a clarity and brilliance it rarely reveals, for the complex chromatic successions sound, for once, in tune, and in beautifully congruent proportion with the successional sense of the whole work.

Here, as in the performances reviewed below, the now extinct Philharmonia Orchestra seems somewhat less reliable than formerly—such bad lapses as one hears in the horn duo in the third movement of No. 40 were, at least, never heretofore permitted past the editing sessions. But the level of timbral and articulative distinction in both ensemble and solo components remains unusually high.

BRUCKNER: Symphony No. 4. Philharmonia Orchestra; Otto Klemperer, cond. Angel 36245.

DVORAK: Symphony No. 9 ("From the New World"). Philharmonia Orchestra; Otto Klemperer, cond. Angel 36246.

Klemperer's integrative gifts achieve spectacular results in music like Bruckner's, where long, and not always equally weighted, spans threaten to wander into perceptual randomness. In particular, the "white" registration of Bruckner's organ-derived orchestration is beautifully realized in this recording, and the larger time units in which essential rhythmic shapes are projected—overlying point-to-point literal reiteration — are immediately and continuously evident. Thus the pacing and dovetailing in both phrasing and instrumental entrances in the slow movement are an especial discovery. Still, this is perhaps the least exploratory of Bruckner's symphonies, and the merely "characteristic" quality of its turns of harmony and sonority often seems more decorative than relationally significant. There remains a considerable subtlety in the movement-to-movement association that is made remarkably apparent in this performance and may be sufficient reward to listeners patient enough to wait for them during the long stretches of internal inactivity.

The Dvorak "New World" Symphony represents, along with the recent recording of the Tchaikowsky Fifth Symphony, Klemperer's most significant contribution to a seriously misunderstood domain of the music literature. For these performances make profound structural sense out of pieces that are usually exploited entirely for their local prettiness, brilliance or orchestral opulence. The real originality of Dvorak's vivid orchestral sonorities is in their primary function as formal articulants; and they "sound" even more stunning when their formal impact is realized. In this light, the way Klemperer evolves a dynamic curve to which every nuance of harmonic, linear and timbral inflection contributes should give a new dimension to most listeners' concept of orchestral virtuosity.

Other new recordings:

BEETHOVEN: Sonatas Nos. 17, 26, 28. Wilhelm Kempff, piano. DGG 138942.

SCHOENBERG: *Gurrelieder*. Bavarian Radio Orchestra; Rafael Kubelik, cond. DGG 138984/85.

STRAUSS: *Daphne*. Hilde Gueden, Fritz Wunderlich. Vienna Symphony; Karl Boehm, cond. DGG 138956/57.

VERDI: *Quattro Pezzi Sacri*. Chorus and Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino; Etorre Gracis, cond. DGG 138962.

WEBER: Piano Sonatas Nos. 3 and 4. Annie D'Arco, piano. L'Oiseau-Lyre SOL 271.

High Office

No man could shoot through that
Gray solar glass almost black
And an inch thick up where he is
At the top. Even the sun's shafts
Are blunted, turned back.

Must we be mad to want to blast?
To think the beautiful
Should be our rulers, who can stand
In the day's light? Valuable
Even in their wounds and worst chance.

But the camouflaged men,
The fish who look out at us
As fish under a brim — If law
Will not let us strike them, still
Sense cannot be taught: These must win,

Hypnotising existence.

William Burford

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FILMS

Robert Hatch

THE HILL

The principals in *The Hill,* directed by Sidney Lumet from a screen play by Ray Rigby, address one another some 70 per cent of the time at the level of a British parade-ground full bellow. This accords with Mr. Lumet's taste for characterization by excess and it may be accurate enough for a drama set in a Saharan military prison during World War II. But since the actors are customarily 2 feet from the microphone when they launch their blasts, the manner lamentably frustrates communication. Lines so delivered convey little beyond undifferentiated menace.

And that, it seems to me, is the overall fault of the picture. It is keyed to such a pitch of physical violence that any variations of motive or behavior are overwhelmed by the spectacle of spurting blood, reeling bodies and breaking bones. Thus, it seems to make little difference that the regimental sergeant major who runs the prison (the commandant being preoccupied with his Arab whore) is dedicated into pounding what he terms human garbage into splendid British fighting men, whereas his most diligent aide, Guard Williams, is determined simply to beat the semblance of humanity out of any unfortunate who comes under his authority. In either case, the men are treated with a brutality that approaches insanity.

In the absence, then, of a rational conflict in the picture, one tries to settle for a moral. But the thesis that it is improper to send soldiers guilty of various military transgressions out into the desert sun to be driven into coma by an egomaniac sergeant major and his staff of carefully selected sadists is not sufficiently controversial to hold the attention of an audience for two hours.

The situation is the more tantalizing because the ghosts of more relevant dramatic material — ectoplasm apparently from the script—cling to the picture. Thus there seems to be something dubious about the ministrations of the "kindly" guard, whose every arrival on the scene seems to coincide with further abuse of the prisoners, and whose maniacal titter suggests that he is himself well around the bend. And perhaps some interesting plausibility could have been given to the character of the cowardly medical officer (Michael Redgrave) who convulses himself into a lion when confronted with a really venomous threat. It is possible, and usually interesting, to show how a worm that has repeatedly declined to turn will in the end do so, but such character assessments cannot be brought off in an atmosphere of bedlam. Again, there is a theme in the determination of the rocklike hero (Sean Connery) not to be cowed by his hellish jailers—a resolution that subjects not only himself but his cellmates to repeated deliriums of torment, but this too remains unresolved in the smashing and shouting.

There is one moment of drama, as opposed to hippodrome butchery. A soldier from the British West Indies (Ossie Davis), maddened by the racial obscenities flung at him, abruptly resigns from the British army. Stripping off his uniform, he stands naked but for his white shorts (loincloth), assumes the exuberant arrogance of an African chieftain and patronizes the custodial staff with a languid benevolence that paralyzes their aggression. Only for a moment, one may be sure, but it is a moment when issues of character and imagination and wit take the stage away from juggernaut.

A parallel scene in which Connery accuses the sergeant major (Harry Andrews) of being in thrall to an out-of-date set of army regulations seemed to me less successful. Connery calls the rules Victorian; from observing their application, I suspect they would have appalled Tamerlane.

I doubt that *The Hill* was made, at least deliberately, to pander to the cruelty that lurks in every audience, and I wonder therefore why it was made. Perhaps as a tract seeking to abolish military prisons commanded by lechers and operated by brutes. I'm for that.

TO DIE IN MADRID

Would you suppose that a quarter century had mercifully dulled the poignancy and the cry to conscience of the Spanish Civil War? Do not attend *To Die in Madrid* in that misapprehension. The people who made the film—Frederic Rossif, who put together the narrative and directed it, Madeleine Chapsal, who wrote the commentary; Helen Scott, who translated it into English; John Geilgud, Irene Worth, William Hutt and George Gonneau, who spoke the words; Maurice Jarre, whose score is played—all these people who made it still care today as not enough of us cared in 1937 and 1938.

I don't want to analyze this film. What is there to say? It is assembled with unfailing and unflinching taste, mostly from contemporary newsreel footage (the cameramen had the mad courage of their profession). It displays the least possible anger; it is clear, unemphatic, dispassionate. It tells the story.

It is a story with too many villains: Franco and Mola, the princes of Spanish Catholicism, Mussolini, Hitler, all the heads of all the Western powers, the oppression of centuries (5,000 men owned half of Spain)—so many villains that one cannot focus one's rage. And the one change that a quarter century has made is that it no longer seems important to do so. Time has turned the villains trivial; only the Spaniards remain.

There seem to have been no battlefields in Spain. The people died in the fields and in the olive groves, on stony pastures, and in the rubble of their fragile white towns. Guernica now means to us Picasso's polemic masterpiece. It was a high-set village, spare and pure of line (from, I suppose, generations of fasting). The *Luftwaffe* razed it in an afternoon—by mistake. It is appalling to see the dead flung down amid such clean beauty; but as always when guns are turned on the populace, the postures of the living are still more unbearable. And there were so many children in Spain.

All civil wars are insanely cruel—a man fights his brother with a special lust. But this one was bloody beyond a nation's predictable capacity to torment itself because it became the proving ground for World War II. Franco did not win his war; Italian and German mercenaries gave him the victory. He has it still.

I can think of no way to sum up a picture which simply shows how Spaniards died for a freedom they had scarcely tasted, and how the purpose, though not the meaning, of their sacrifice was nullified. It is a picture full of faces, dwellings, monuments and tended land — all very beautiful in a terrible time.

Vietnam, I have heard, is beautiful. Who are the mercenaries there? I shall be told that the historical analogy is not exact, but I shall stand by the analogy of the people.

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